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THE
KARL BARTH THEOLOGY

OR

THE NEW
TRANSCENDENTALISM

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PREFACE

PEOPLE in the United States who have kept in touch with religious thought know that the celebrated Swiss theologian, Dr. Karl Barth, has hurled an enormous bomb into the theological camp and caused a scatterment right and left. Theologians are not quite certain what has hit them, but they agree that it was something beyond the ordinary. The object of this book is to describe as accurately as possible the nature of the high explosive, its ingredients and the casualties, if any.

The dialectic theologians, with Karl Barth at their head, have published a considerable body of literature, Barth himself having written a half dozen books and many articles in theological quarterlies and Church papers and Professor Emil Brunner an equal number. Other Barthians have written extensively.

Only two books, one by Barth, the other by Brunner, have appeared in English and have served a useful purpose. The movement in Switzerland, Germany and to some extent in Hungary, France and Holland has caused no little commotion in religious and theological circles and has found staunch friends and champions, but also bitter enemies. There is a third group, who, seeing in Barthianism a return to and emphasis on Biblical and genuine Christian faith and doctrine, are perplexed over strange admixtures of revolutionary doctrines irreconcilable with traditional Christianity and find it difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at a clear understanding of the real nature and value of the new theology. During the past decade, theological reviews and Church papers have carried articles on this new attempt to reconcile orthodox and liberal tendencies in Europe and fundamentalism and modernism in this country. While certain aspects of Barthianism are clear enough, others and by far the greater half, are in doubt or dispute.

Obviously, the first step is to ascertain what Barthianism really is, according to its founders and exponents. When theological and philosophical specialists in German universities wrangle over the question and fail to reach anything like an agreement on the fundamental issues, much less on details, we on this side with little interest in profound metaphysical discussion (Barthianism being at bottom not so much theology as abstruse philosophy) have difficulty in finding out what it all means and what its bearing on Christian doctrine and life is.

The primary purpose of this book is to reproduce from the voluminous Barthian literature whatever directly or indirectly seems to reveal the fundamental and organizing principle or principles (there being several) of these thinkers (who have at their fingers' end the philosophies and theologies of all ages, university-bred men in the European sense)—to reproduce in the form of translations, epitomés, or citations in the original German, what the authors really write in defence of their contention and thus enable the reader to judge for himself as to the merits of the movement. It aims to be in a small way a source-book on Barthianism.

The undertaking is fraught with uncommon difficulties. Karl Barth, a master of the art of expression and gifted with an exuberant imagination, revels in lengthy sentences (see one of nearly three hundred words on page 168) striking compounds, new coinages (Da-Sein So-Sein, Aseitaet, Ataraxis, Amphibolie, Inkonzinnitaet, etc.) and involved constructions, cryptic, if not cabalistic.[1] Like the university style of German literature, Barth's diction is exceptionally complex and not infrequently requires, on account of a superior inflectional system in German, a breaking up of a sentence into two in order to reach tolerable sense in English. Even so, if one attempts to transmute he incurs the risk of failing to reproduce the exact shade of thought of the original.

Then, again, Barth having new ideas frequently coins new words and expressions, for which, there being no English equivalent, one must offer an explanation, with the possibility of misinterpretation. Barth's admission that his viewpoint has changed from time to time creates no little uncertainty as to his real position. He has also an exasperating habit of couching some of his characteristic teachings in Delphic phraseology, as much as to say 'understand me if you can,' *fasse es wer's fassen kann, sauve qui peut.*

A secondary purpose is to state in terms as brief as the complexity of the subject admits, what appears to be the inner character of the movement and its practicability in the Christianity of today.

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[1] "Wer je Karl Barth zu lesen versucht hat, der weiss, dass man sich hierüber den Kopf zerbrechen darf, so dass es in dem Schädel knackt, ehe man zu einiger Klarheit kommt" (Max Strauch, **Die Theologie Karl Barths**, S. 4).

What is Barthianism? It is a *New Supernaturalism,* or rather a NEW TRANSCENDENTALISM combined with a Cosmic-Eschatological Dualism, according to Barth himself. Its central and germinal thought is that Christianity must return to the doctrine of the absolute transcendence of God, that God is God, while man is merely man, finite, the creature of a day and incapable of knowing God *(finitum non capax infiniti)*; That, eternity and time being qualitatively different, nothing in time has reality or worth (not even praise or prayer); in short that truth, all truth, not merely religious truth, being in essence eternal, is not discoverable by finite man (not even by the wisest humanist or scientist) but is a divine revelation, a revelation, however, that is necessarily hidden, for ultimate truth and reality cannot be discovered by man, but are transcendental.[2]

How does Barth enunciate his system? In the preface to the second edition of the *Römerbrief* he writes: "What do I mean by saying that the inner dialectics of the context is the divine factor in interpretation? The critics charge that I mean simply my own system. If I have a system, it is, as says Kierkegaard, the infinite qualitative difference between time and eternity, which in the negative and the positive sense is ever kept in mind....God is in heaven, man on earth. The relation of God to man, of man to God, is for me the theme of the Bible and the sum of philosophy.

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[2] "Die Fachsprache nennt Barths und Brunners Theologie einen transzendentalen Dualismus auf eschatologischer Grundlage" (Paul Burckhardt, **Was sagt uns die Theologie Karl Barths und seiner Freunde?** S. 16). "Der begriffliche Rahmen, das Koordinaten System, in das sie eingezeichnet werden muss, ist ein radikaler, kosmisch-eschatologischer Dualismus. Zwei Welten, eine vergehende und eine kommende stehen einander gegenüber....Und zwar alle diese Prädikationen in ihrem präzisisten, d. h. transzendentalen Sinne" (Max Strauch, **op. cit.** S. 14). "Dem transzendentalen Idealismus der Rechtfertigung entspricht der transzendentale Realismus der Erlösung" (E. Brunner, **Die Mystik und das Wort**, zweite Auflage, S. 259). "It [the Barthian theology] is an out-and-out transcendence with no trace of immanence" (G. Wehrung, one of the editors of the **Zeitschrift fuer Systm. Theologie**, in an article on **Vom Irrationalen**). E. Husserl, founder of the new German phenomenological school, calls his system a transcendental idealism, implying a realm of pure, or transcendental consciousness (see J. S. Bixler, **Journ. Religion**, Oct., 1929, p. 593). "Among dialectic theologians the question whether revelation is a possibility of human knowledge receives no satisfactory answer" (W. Wiesner). "Barthians build their theology on a dualistic time-eternity philosophy" (E. Bohlen). But according to science, as says H. Hoeffding, time and eternity are the same, and there was no beginning of the physical universe. Are Barthians, or scientists, right?

Philosophers regard human wisdom, the Bible regards Jesus Christ, as the *fons et origo*" (P. XIII).

Barth continues: "In interpreting Romans, I assume that Paul was conscious of such relationship and that I am merely stating it....Whether my assumption is justified will appear from my interpretation of the epistle as a whole and of its several parts.... If my assumption be false, if Paul really spoke of something else than the permanent *crisis of time and eternity,* I should be led by the text itself to an *absurdity.* If one were to ask, finally, why I start with just this postulate, I should answer, God is God. Although not claiming to have explained everything satisfactorily, I have found no reason to recede from my starting-point. Paul knew something about God that we do not know. That I know Paul knew this is my system, my 'dogmatic presupposition,' my 'Alexandrianism' or however one may designate it" (P. XIV).

In short, there is a Thisside and a Yonside; but the Yonside is the real side. Time is one thing, eternity another. The two are incommensurable. In the hands of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner this conception of the qualitative difference between time and eternity becomes at one tremendous sweep a cosmology, teleology, theodicy, metaphysics and theology.

The justification of the term TRANSCENDENTALISM to designate the new theology is twofold: first, its affinity with the Kantian transcendentalism, due to Barth's close study of Kant and his acceptance of various Kantian tenets; second, its use in German philosophical and theological circles as expressive of its fundamental character. The system is in some respects a new supernaturalism, but this term does not appear to be sufficiently broad to express some features of Barthianism.[3]

Whatever else Barthianism may be, it is first and last a movement in which the transcendence of God as over against immanence is the pivot upon which all turns. It is a transcendental epistemology and metaphysics through and through; and, that which is of more practical import, is the claim that religion is transcendental or nothing.[4]

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[3] Since the German word **Supernaturalismus** denotes in some quarters an arbitrary breaking into the natural order and is therefore more objectionable than the English **supernaturalism,** various other German words are employed, as **Das Transcendentale, Das Irrationale,** to designate the super-temporal, super-rational, supernatural.

[4] "Religion is metaphysics and nothing else—**credo quia absurdum**—and this metaphisics is not the metaphysics of knowledge, argument, proof

The rigid transcendence and transcendentalism, carried through unflinchingly, necessitates a radical reconstruction not only of the theological, but of the normative sciences, as *e. g.* ethics. With the obliteration of moral and religious distinctions, there can be, strictly, no system of ethics in Barthianism.[5]

Barthianism is an all-inclusive world-view, probably the most original and comprehensive, certainly the most radical and revolutionary of recent times. Whether it is a panacea for the ills of mankind is a question sought to be answered in these pages, but, apart from the complexity of the subject, rendered difficult by obscurities of thought and expression in Barth's writings. Barth himself candidly remarks that the *Römerbrief* is not intended for immature minds, theological children. It demands serious critical study. Professor K. Mueller, Erlangen, says that the book might have a bad influence on unripe minds (*"Das Buch könnte auf unreife Geister sehr fatal wirken"*). Almost the same might be said of some other of Barth's writings.

The aim in this inquiry is to cite directly from the voluminous Barthian literature a sufficient number of passages verifying the

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(whch is mere philosophy and learnedness) but lived and experienced metaphysics, that is the unthinkable as a certainty, the supernatural as a fact, life as existence in a world that is not actual, but true. Jesus never lived one moment in any other world than this....To ascribe social purposes to Jesus is blasphemy....Religion is first and last metaphysics, other-worldliness (**Jenseitigkeit**), awareness in a world of which the evidence of the senses merely lights the foreground. It is life in and with the supersensible. And where the capacity for this awareness, or even the capacity for believing in its existence is wanting, real religion is at an end." This was not written by Karl Barth, though it might well have been, but by Oswald Spengler, in "**The Decline of the West,**" II, pp. 212, 217.

[5] "The Bible is not a text-book of history, nor a journal for moral life. Surprising as it may seem, the Bible reveals a remarkable indifference regarding our ideals of good and bad. The case stands thus: the chief thing is not the acts of man, but the acts of God, not the different courses which we may pursue if we have a good will, but the power out of which a good will may be created. The key to the situation is: acceptance or rejection of the sovereignty of God (**Annahme oder Verwerfung der Koenigsherrschaft Gottes**). This is the new world of the Bible, in which God and his law (**seine Moral**) rule....In the Bible even that which we call piety is not of supreme moment....Churches, though they make Scripture the basis of morality, never agree....He who once sees how easy it is to find reasons for a cherished view (**macht dieses ewige Spiel nicht mehr mit**) will have none of this" (W. Kolfhaus, **Die Botschaft des Karl Barth,** pp. 28, 29, 30). See Rudolf Koehler, **Kritik der Theologie der Krisis,** 1925.

positions taken in order to avoid as much as possible the charge of unfairness or misrepresentation. The writer, conscious that with the best intentions one may fail to transmute the exact thoughts of another, especially when couched in unusual phraseology, trusts that at least on the main issues he has faithfully diagnosed Barthianism. A list of Barthian authorities is appended. The chief writers for or against Barth are listed in the "*Index of Authors*" at the end of the book.

A. S. Z.

Dayton, O., August 1930.

CHIEF WORKS OF KARL BARTH AND BARTHIANS

KARL BARTH

Der Römerbrief. Fifth Edition. 1926........Abbreviation..Rbr.
Das Wort Gottes und die Theologie. 1925...............WGuT.
Die Christliche Dogmatik, im Entwurf. I, 1927...........Dog. I.
Die Theologie u. die Kirche. 1928.........................TuK.
Die Auferstehung der Toten. 1928........................AT.
Erkläurng des Philipperbriefes. 1928......................EP.
Vom Christlichen Leben....................................CL.
K. Barth und Thurneysen. Suchet Gott, u.s.w.................SG.
K. und Heinrich Barth. Zur Lehre vom Heiligen Geist. 1929.LHG.

EMIL BRUNNER

Das Symbolische in der Relegiösen Erkenntnis. 1914.........SE.
Die Grenzen der Humanität. 1922..........................GH.
Erlebnis, Erkenntnis und Glaube. 1923...................EEuG.
Philosophie und Offenbarung. 1925........................PuO.
Religionsphilosophie Evangelischer Theologie. 1927.......RPET.
Der Mittler, zur Besinnung über den christlichen Glauben. 1927.M.
Die Mystik und das Wort. 1928..........................MuW.
The Theology of Crisis. 1929.............................TC.
Gott und Mensch. Vier Untersuchungen über das personhafte
Sein. 1930 ....GuM.

EDUARD THURNEYSEN

Destojewski. 1929 ....D.

FRIEDRICH GOGARTEN

Ich Glaube an den Dreinigen Gott.........................GDG.
Von Glauben und Offenbarung............................GO.
Glaube und Wirklichkeit..................................GW.

ADOLF BULTMANN

Das Problem einer theologischen Exegese des Neuen Testaments. 1926	ENT.
Jesus. 1928	J.

HEINRICH BARTH

Das Problem d. Ursprungs in d. platonischen Philosophie	UP.
Die Philosophie d. Praktischen Vernunft	PPV.

HINRICH KNITTENMEYER

Die Philosophie und Das Christentum. 1927	PuC.

GEORG MERZ

Der Vorreformatorische Luther	VL.

W. KOLFHAUS

Die Botschaft des Karl Barth. 1927	B.

CONTENTS

Preface v
Chief Works of Karl Barth and Barthians............... xi

PART I

PROLEGOMENA TO BARTHIANISM

Chapter I

Barth's Methodology

PAGE
A. The Bible as Norm and Standard.................... 5
B. The Dialectic Method.............................. 5–7
C. The Paradoxical Method............................ 7–15

Chapter II

The Epistemological-Metaphysical Problem

A. The Epistemological Problem....................... 15
B. The Metaphysical Problem.......................... 21

Chapter III

Preliminary Outline of Barthianism

A. Early Period 27
    1. Traditional Reformation Standpoint............. 28
    2. Veering toward a new Position.................. 30
B. Later Period
    1. Predestination; the Eternity-Time Relation........ 31
    2. No Free Agency................................. 32
    3. Difference between Eternity and Time the Organizing Principle 34
    4. The Tremendous Scope of Barthianism............ 36
    5. Karl Barth and the Barthian School.............. 37–42

PART II

BARTHIAN DUALISMS

Chapter IV

A Cosmic-Eschatological Dualism

I. Barth's Chief Points
    A. The Present or Time-World.................. 45
    B. The Future or Eternal World........... 46–8

PAGE

II. Examination of the Cosmic-Eschatological Dualism
- A. The Biblical Background........................ 50
  - 1. Significance of the Barthian Contention....... 51–2
  - 2. Redemption not in this Life, but in the next.... 53–4
  - 3. Scleiermacher's Philosophy of History........ 55
  - 4. Is the Physical Universe Eternal or Temporal? 56
  - 5. The Divine Plan from Eternity............... 56–8
  - 6. Creation not Eternal 58
- B. Between the Times 63

CHAPTER V

The Chasm between God and Man

A. Barth's Viewpoint
- 1. Man, though highly Endowed, a Sinner and unable to save himself 64
- 2. A Supralapsarian Foreordination................ 66

B. Is the Chasm as Great as Represented by Barth
- 1. Man's Personality 67
- 2. Conscience 68
- 3. Repentance 69
- 4. Salvability 70
- 5. God's Works an absolute Riddle................. 70
- 6. Man's Work Nil................................ 71
- 7. No Real Communion between God and Man........ 72
- 8. Barth's Inadequate View of Human Personality... 72
- 9. Futility of Human Endeavor.................... 73
- 10. *Capax Deitatis* 74–5

CHAPTER VI

The Unknown God

I. Barth's Basic Position
- A. Faith and Knowledge 77
- B. Knowledge of God an "Iridescent Dream"......... 78

II. Review of Barth's Doctrine of the Unknown God
- A. The Testimony of Scripture..................... 80
  - 1. The Old Testament........................... 80
  - 2. The New Testament 81

PAGE

B. God and Man in Reciprocal Relation

1. The Fundamental Barthian Paradox.......... 83
2. The Christian Doctrine of God............... 84
3. Mysteries in Science......................... 85
4. Can Man without Scripture Revelation Know God? 86
5. Contradictory Theories concerning God........ 87
6. Agnosticism 88
7. Barth's Strong Language 91
8. Barth's Sensus Communis 91
9. Barth, Brunner and E. V. Gerhart............ 93
10. Kohlbrueggianismus and Barthianism......... 94

Chapter VII

The Bible as the Fallible Word of Man

A. No Textual or Literary-Historical Criticism........... 95
1. Barth's Introduction to the Word of God.......... 96
2. The Bible a Conglomerate of Writings............ 98
3. Thurneysen Accepts the Grafian Negative Old Testament Criticism 99
4. Thurneysen's Appreciation of Bernhard Duhm, the Grafian 101–2
5. Has the Mosaic Period been "Wiped out"?......... 102

B. Was Abraham an Historical Figure or a Myth?....... 105

C. How Barthians Undermine the Credibility of Scripture.107–114

Chapter VIII

The Bible as the Infallible Word of God

A. God's Revelation. Barth's Position.................. 115

B. Revelation and Textual Transmission................. 118

C. Revelation and Inspiration 124–8

Chapter IX

The Unknown God Revealed in Christ

A. Barth's Position in Outline

Jesus Reveals and Conceals God. The Onceness (*Einmaligkeit*) of Revelation. The Incarnation a Revelation once-for-all 133–6

PAGE

B. Observations on Barth's Position

The Death and Resurrection of Christ not strictly Historical. No real History of the Incarnation. Revelation Grounded in the Trinity, the Trinity in Revelation, a Paradox................137–148

CHAPTER X

The Holy Spirit and Faith

A. The Metaphysical and the Dynamical in the *Holy Spirit.* The Spirit Reveals God Transcendentally....149–154

B. *Faith.* Definition in Reformation Catechisms. Faith in the Barthian System. Relation of Faith to Knowledge. Scientific Belief and Christian Faith. E. Brunner on Faith: the "emptier the the better." Transcendentalism of Faith. B. B. Warfield on Faith 155–165

CHAPTER XI

The Church

The Church as Viewed by Barth in the Römerbrief, in his Word of God and in the Dogmatics. His inadequate Representation of the Church. The Thisside and the Yonside Church...........166–175

CHAPTER XII

Revelation, History, Onceness and the Super-Historical

A. Revelation and History

Not Scripture, but Reformation Confessions the Point of Departure. Revelation a Breaking through into Time. Four Oncenesses (*Einmaligkeiten*). Revelations in Old and New Testament 176–184

B. Philosophy of History and Theology

Christian Faith and Historical Investigation. Mediacy and Immediacy. Pietism, Mysticism and Schleiermacherism. Historism 185–190

C. The Barthian Theory of History

Philip Schaff on Biblical Records and History. Gruentzmacher on Sacred History. Historical and Super-Historical in Christianity............191–197

PART III

PAGE

BARTHIAN TRANSCENDENTALISM

Chapter XIII

The Transcendental

A. Kant's Transcendentalism 201–3
B. Kant on Human Personality
The Thing-in-itself unknown. God unknowable. Did Kant Refute Idealism? Kant's Critique of the practical Reason 203–6
C. Barth's Transcendental Epistemology
No Formal, but an underlying Epistemology. Barth's Third Dimension, or the Transcendental..... 206–8
D. Transcendence and Immanence
Transcendence and Immanence in Scripture. True Immanence neither Pantheism nor Humanism. Christian Doctrine of Immanence. Barth's *Finitum non capax Infiniti* untenable. Reciprocal Relation of God and Man according to Dr. E. V. Gerhart 209–219

Chapter XIV

Der Irrationalismus (Super-Rationalism)

A. The Boast of Science.............................. 220–1
B. Intuitions and Postulates 221–2
C. Super-Rationalism (Der Irrationalismus) as Pragmatism 222–5
D. Super-Rationalism (Der Irrationalismus) as Transcendental 225–8
E. Super-Rationalism (Der Irrationalismus) as the Holy and Numinous 229–33

Chapter XV

Inadequacy of the Barthian Dualism and Transcendentalism

A. *The Crisis Theology not Wholly New*

1. Stephan and Brunner.......................... 234–5
2. Wehrung on the Super-Rational.................. 235–7
3. Neo-Kantianism and Barthianism................ 237–8
4. Theology and Scientific Method.................. 239–40

PAGE

B. *Is a Barthian Theology Possible?*

1. Theology merely Prolegomenon (Barth) 241–3
2. Barthian Theology technically no System (Brunner) 244–6

C. *Barth-Brunner Reconciliation between Fundamentalism and Modernism*

1. Barth's Statement of the Crisis and Proposed Solution 247–8
2. Brunner on Christianity and Science 248–9

D. *Inadequacy of the Barthian Dualism*

1. Eternity and Time 250
2. The Chasm between God and Man 251
3. The Paradox of the Unknown Known and the Known Unknown God 252
4. The Transcendental Bible. The Bible as fallible Word of Man and infallible Word of God.... 253–5
5. God Revealed and yet Unrevealed in Christ........ 256
6. The Paradox of Faith.............. 257–8
7. The Paradox of the Yonside and the Thisside Church 259–60

E. *The Barthian Upheaval*

1. The Transcendence of God.............. 261
2. The New Transcendentalism 262–3
3. Man and Sin 264–5
4. Barthianism and the New Humanism............. 266
5. Religious Education 267
6. The Barthian Bible 267–8
7. Jesus Christ 269
8. Conclusion 269–71
9. Opinions of Others 272–3

Index of Authors.............. 275

Vita ....

PART I

PROLEGOMENA TO BARTHIANISM

CHAPTER I

BARTH'S METHODOLOGY

On what foundation does Barth erect his imposing structure? The Bible as to matter; the *via dialectica et paradoxica* as to method.

A. THE BIBLE AS NORM AND STANDARD

With Barth the Bible is everything, or nothing. Either the Bible as a special revelation of God, whose representation of the creation, man, sin, redemption is substantially correct, as held by Luther, Calvin, the Reformers and protestants generally; or the Bible as a purely human production, containing indeed valuable ethical and religious matter, but no more inspired than the Zend-Avesta or the Homeric poems.

The battle is between the word of God and the word of man. Unless Scripture be accepted as the norm and standard of religion, theology, psychology, anthropology, philosophy and of all human activities, no satisfactory, comprehensive, all-inclusive world-view is possible. Science has made many valuable discoveries and contributed greatly to human progress, but it has made no discoveries in fact or theory which undermine the revelations of Scripture. As said by the late Dr. C. A. Briggs: "I challenge any man to produce any valid results of modern philosophy or modern science that will in the slightest degree impair the Christ of the Church as represented by her creeds and institutions."

He might also have quoted Dr. James Orr: "It is the general question of a supernatural or non-supernatural conception of the universe. Is there a supernatural Being-God? Is there a supernatural relation of God to man, so that God and man have communion one with another? Is there a supernatural revelation? Has that revelation culminated in a supernatural person—Christ? Is there a supernatural work in the souls of men? Is there a supernatural Redemption?" *(The Christian View of God and the World,* p. 11.)

Barth argues that since men have for centuries propounded and tested all sorts of theories for the salvation of mankind, and, having "escorted God to the frontiers of the universe," have ended in chaos, it is high time to reinstate him on his throne. Barth's rallying cry to Protestantism is: "Back to Christ," "back to the Bible," in its plain, unalloyed meaning. In one of the papers on "The Word of God," he states clearly the need of a return to Biblical doctrine: "Our disparagement of doctrine is the fox's disparagement of grapes. Had we something more essential and authoritative to say, had we a theology convincing to, and accepted by, definite and increasing groups of people, had we a gospel which we *had to preach,* we should think differently. *On the whole we do not have such a gospel in our churches.* . . . Would it not be better to bracket the question of doctrine and assume that *somehow* it has already been solved? . . . I think not . . . The Reformed Church of the world at large, and Protestant churches in general, will sooner or later have to face it more seriously than they do now—whatever the costs and whatever the results. The talk of pressing forward to practical tests of the old truths in new relations, is *a sham solution.* What is to be tested? In the long run will it escape the eyes of the children of the world (to say nothing of ourselves, the children of the household) that we have here a predicate without a subject" (*WGuT,* 181, Horton's Transl., p. 222.)

Barth holds that it is impossible to "press forward" before the question of doctrine is settled. "How can we longer close our eyes to the fact there is an end to the repair work, the organizing, and the *religious education* upon which, rather than upon theology, the people of our churches today declare they prefer to busy themselves?" It may be stated, as will appear later, that Barth regards so-called religious schemes, of which one hears so much as false epistemologically, psychologically and pedagogically, because they start with and are based upon what man rather than what God does in religion.

B. THE DIALECTICAL METHOD

In order to understand Barth's approach, one must grasp the inner nature of his logic. Not a little of the uniqueness and complexity of his theology is due to his peculiar thought processes.

The dialectic method was employed by Socrates, Aristotle, Kant, and Hegel, but it has reached its climax in Barth. Dialectics is the critical examination of a concept or opinion. The dialectics of Socrates was an informal discussion proceeding by question and answer toward a definite conclusion. In the hands of Socrates, with his mastery of facts and principles, it was a powerful weapon to refute an opponent, or rather to lead an opponent to refute himself. "Dialectics may be defined as that science which defines the essence or being of each nature, which abstracts the good and is ready to do battle against all opponents in the cause of the good" (Jowett, *Dialogues of Plato*, II, 73.)

Kant called the constructive part of his system transcendental Dialectic. As will be seen, Barth is rather stronger on the destructive than the constructive side. There is in the Barthian dialectic a triadic movement as in the Hegelian, but in a reverse order: Synthesis (God), thesis (man), antithesis, synthesis, in an ever cyclic movement.

Since no fact, thought or concept is isolated, but ultimately related to something else, Barth regards the broken, indirect, multi-dimentional, or the dialectic method as the only one by which a valid synthesis can be reached. A diameter implies a circumference, a positive, a negative pole of electricity, a right-hand glove a left, etc. "With the Yes and the No, the No and the Yes in which we find ourselves, we are thrown into perplexity, into the *crisis* of the Scriptures. Abandon every attempt to explain this perplexity... When we ask the Bible what it has to offer, it answers by pointing to the question of *election*... The thesis upon which all things rest is never a datum...The axiomatic is never the obvious" (*WGuT*, p. 74.)

Again, "there is never so decisive a Yes that it does not harbor a No; there is never so decisive a No that it is not liable to be toppled over into a Yes. There is no certainty of election today which may not become a sense of reprobation tomorrow; similarly, no sense of reprobation which may not become a certainty of election" (*Ibid*, p. 75). "We know that God is He whom we do not know and that just this not-knowing is the source of our knowing" *(Rbr.*, p. 21.) Barth quotes Kierkegaard approvingly: "Spirit is a negation of direct immediacy. If Christ be true God, he must be unknowable *(unerkenntlich)" (Ibid*, p. 14).

The student of Barth must not be misled by the endless iteration of the Yes and the No, the positive and the negative, the negation of the negation, and even the negation of the negation of the negation, the ever recurring paradoxes, and the *sic et non* of the schoolmen. These are largely human locutions to designate the inscrutability of God's purpose and providence. Kant shows, and all thought that is thought, allows that there is a realm which the finite mind cannot penetrate. It is trancendent to human cognition. The deeper science penetrates into the nature of things the greater the mysteries. Is God everything? Yes. No. Is there ether? Yes. No. Is space infinite? Yes. No. What is electricity, gravitation, life, mind? Nobody knows.

In short, according to Barth the theology of Paul, Luther, Calvin, begins with the doctrine of God and ends with man; modern theology begins with man and ends in a bog, or nowhere.

C. THE PARADOXICAL METHOD

Closely connected with the dialectic is the paradoxical method. Scripture often employs two apparently contradictory sentences to express profound truths. The term paradox in classical Greek means "contrary to opinion," contrary to all expectation, something wonderful, incredible. It occurs once in the New Testament Greek, Luke 5:26, "Strange things." It plays a prominent part in the Barthian dialectics, examples occurring on every page.

According to the New English Dictionary a paradox is: 1. A statement or tenet contrary to received opinion or belief with the implication that it is marvellous; 2. A statement or proposition which on the face of it is self-contradictory, absurd, or at variance with common sense. In brief, the paradox is used in two senses, either as contradictory of received opinion, or as self-contradiction. When Paul says: "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me," Gal. 2:20, he expresses a true paradox, that is, it is against appearances, but not against reality that Christ lives in the Christian. Any statement violating the categories of thought as laid down by Aristotle, Kant and Hamilton is a false paradox. The affirmation that God is both unknown and known is allowable, if the meaning be that he is unknown in essence, but adequately known in revelation. But the affirmation that God is absolutely unknown and unknowable and yet known, is a false paradox, for it contravenes the law of identity.

1. Old Testament Paradoxes

Old Testament writers use the paradox occasionally. "Be not righteous overmuch." "Prisoners of hope." Isaiah in spirit approached the New Testament: "Buy, eat, buy wine and milk without money and without price." "Ye hear indeed, but understand not, ye see indeed, but perceive not." Running through the fifty-third of Isaiah is the idea of victory despite utter defeat according to God's secret plan.

2. Christ's Paradoxes

The New Testament is the great book of paradoxes. Of all historical personages Jesus, the Christ, was the most paradoxical in character, thought and speech; indeed to such a degree that it would be possible to construct a theory of his unique nature from his paradoxes alone. In scope and profoundness they transcend human thought. Take the Sermon on the Mount. "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." "Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Love your enemies." "Take no thought for your life." "He that findeth his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant." "Woe unto you that are rich."

The dominant note of the New Testament is the paradox. "The old values are reversed; poverty, suffering, meekness, ignorance and ostracism become virtues, the lowly are exalted and the high brought down" (W. K. Stewart, *Hibbert's Journal*, Jan., 1929.) In penetrating beneath the surface of Christ's sayings one discovers a profound, comprehensive, world-view which men are only beginning to fathom. The paradoxes of Jesus mean that, Sometime, Somehow, Somewhere present earthly rôles will be reversed, that ordinary human values will go for naught: they are false and unsatisfying. "Jesus was the supreme maker of paradoxes" (Papini, *Life of Christ).*

3. Pauline Paradoxes

Paul's paradoxes reveal a remarkable knowledge of Christ's spirit and teachings. "The word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness." "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world." "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him be a fool." "Christians . . ., as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and behold we live."

The many apparent contradictions, but in reality profound truths in which Paul excels, rivet attention and provoke thought. "If the truth of God through my lie aboundeth unto his glory, why am I also judged as a sinner?" How is it possible to change the truth of God into a lie?

How could Christ who knew no sin be made to be sin for us? The originality of the New Testament is nowhere more apparent than in the richness of the paradoxes.

4. The Paradoxes in Theological Thought

Reflecting the Scriptural spirit and method, writers on religion and theology have resorted to paradox, sometimes illegitimately. Thus Tertullian: *certum est quia impossible.* The early Christian creeds abound in paradox. Christianity itself is a paradox. That Christ is both God and man at the same time is a true and the most absolute paradox in history. You say: impossible! But until you explain how soul and body can function together, you must admit with Barth that the impossible is not only possible, but a reality. Then, as to the *bête noir,* predestination and free will. According to Scripture both are true and reconcilable in the infinite mind; according to the man of the street and our shallow philosophy they are irreconcilable. The greatest Biblical truths, incarnation, death of Christ, atonement, resurrection, are paradoxical.

Great heresies have sprung from the non-acceptance of profound truths and concepts not congenial to, or fathomable by the unregenerate man. "We live in a double world of mental and material phenomena, of mind and body. This conjunction is so familiar a part of our experience that we are apt to forget its strangeness, though in truth nothing in religion is more irrational or more incomprehensible." (P. E. More, *The Christ of the New Testament.)* Writers on religion may be divided into two groups: the humanists, who think that Christianity is a failure because it has not conquered the world, and the supernaturalists, who hold that true Christianity will for a long time be restricted to the few. "Many are called, but few are chosen." "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way and few there be that find it."

A Danish philosopher, Kierkegaard, an ultra-individualistic Protestant, worked out the idea of the paradox to the limit. With a faith not unlike that of a character in a French novel who wished there were *four* persons in the Godhead so that his faith might be all the greater, Kierkegaard longed for the absolute paradox. In 1843 he wrote in his journal: "That God's Son became a man is certainly the highest metaphysical and religious paradox, but still it is not the deepest ethical paradox. The greatest ethical paradox was when God's Son entered this earthly reality, became a member of it and submitted himself to all its pettiness... The absolute paradox must be that God's Son became a man, came into the world, went about in it, and that no one noticed it, who remained in the strictest sense of the world an individual man, who had an occupation, etc." Barth acknowledges his indebtedness to the Danish philosopher. Kierkegaard has been called the Pascal of the Scandinavian countries, also a Tertullian of the North. The unbridged chasm between the infinite and the finite, faith and reason, the unseen (real) world and the seen (unreal) world engaged his thought.

We owe to Kierkegaard the development of the "Either-Or" conception. He has found an enthusiastic follower in the Spaniard, Unamuno, a relentless foe of all false religions. It is only in modern times that the paradox, though occurring here and there in literature, has been employed as an *"elenchos,"* a "clincher" in argumentation. We are familiar with such expressions as "faithless faith," "pious fraud," and Schlegel's dictum, "paradox is at once everything that is good and great"; but Kierkegaard, Rudolph Otto and Karl Barth are the triumvirate who have industriously cultivated the field of paradox and of a Christian (and indirectly a philosophic) dialectics. Among contemporary theologians Otto, author of "The Holy" has caught the Kierkegaard spirit and developed it independently in his theory of the *Numinous.*

It is, however, Barth who has made this conception of a "crisis," of paradoxes in religion, theology and philosophy, of apparently irreconcilable and yet ultimately reconcilable propositions the basis of his system, developed it with skill and adroitness, and butressed it with proof from every department of thought. It is unfortunate that Barth's writings, especially, the *opus magnum,* the commentary on *Romans,* lack order and logical development. In the course of a single paragraph, and even sentence, he digresses into wholly irrelevant matter, obscuring the subject in hand and confusing the reader. A typical example is his sentence on the Church, which contains nearly three hundred words *(Roemerbrief,* p. 271–2). He candidly states in his preface to the fifth edition that the book is not for "immature minds, theological children"; and Prof. K. Mueller, Erlangen, writes that the work might have a dangerous influence on unripe minds.

5. *Wooden-Iron and Credo quia Absurdum*

In order that the reader may be further prepared to understand and evaluate Barth, reference must be made to a few more points. His apparent acceptance of the concept wooden-iron and *Credo quia absurdum* and the use which he makes of Otto's *"ganz andere,"* would seem to imply that for him the A = A of traditional logic becomes A = non — A. If such statements are more than rhetorical hyperboles, they are absolutely illicit and contravene basic principles in logic and philosophy. If science is correct in holding that wood is not iron, the phrase wood-iron is nonsense. If it were affirmed that wood had been changed into iron, the objection would still hold, for this would mean that an object previously wood is now iron.

That a caterpillar is a butterfly is not a paradox, for the latter is the former more developed. Nor is the statement that not even God can change that which has happened into that which has not happened a true paradox; it is an absurdity.

On his premise of absolute predestination (supralapsarianism) Barth allows that he cannot explain how man can voluntarily do the will of God and so he speaks of the possibility of the impossible and the impossibility of the possible. It is all very confusing unless one remembers that German theology is thoroughly saturated with German philosophy. If with Kant it be assumed that the thing-in-itself cannot be known by man, but must be conceived thus and so, there is no logical objection to Barth's contention. If a relation exists between two spheres, one of which is known to us, it is not illicit to predicate a possibility of that unknown. So, according to Barth, if we understand him, the phrase "possible impossibility" regarded as a mere concept (epistemologically, ontologically) is not illogical.

But this speculation is of such a highly transcendental character that it explains little and has less practical value.

6. *Peculiarities of Barthian Methodology*

Is then the Barthian dialectics a species of intellectual word-play, of Yes and No, affirmation and denial, with the truth somewhere between the extremes? Are the problems of revelation, redemption, faith to be settled by the invigorating exercise of discovering subtle paradoxes and striking contradictions? Does not such a method lead to palpable absurdities and leave the problem unsolved? It cannot be denied that such is the outcome in a number of instances. It would not be difficult to select from Barth's books and essays quite a volume of half-truths, questionable premises, illicit dialectics and irreconcilable contradictions; but such a course would be one-sided and fail to reach the core of his fundamental contentions.[1]

Barth means, as we understand, not, that revelation, foreknowledge, faith are in the plan of God paradoxical, but only as conceived in the finite mind, which is incompetent to understand the Infinite, or, as briefly expressed by him: *finitum non capax infiniti.* Similarly as to his dialectics, Barth and his school have extended the Socratic meaning of the term dialectics to denote the mode of procedure in reconciling the fundamental antitheses between God and man, time and eternity, religious experience and divine revelation. Strictly taken their dialectics grows out of the conception of a transcendent order which man accepts in science (its metaphysical assumptions) and in theology (faith) as ultimate data not susceptible of formal proof.

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[1] Barth sins in this regard more than his confreres, who are in general more cautious. But Karl Barth is a genius and no genius was ever consistent with himself.

A typical illustration of the Barthian paradox and dialectics is afforded in the character of Jesus Christ (we do not here discuss the legitimacy) : Jesus as a personality appearing on the stage at a certain time and place is a subject of religious history; but Jesus Christ cannot be viewed in any such way, for he is the trans-temporal, trans-historical revelation of the unknown God. Jesus is knowable; Christ is not.

CHAPTER II

THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL—METAPHYSICAL PROBLEM

The question can God be known is a sub-head of a broader question, How can we know anything? This is supposed to be answered in epistemology, the science of knowledge. Broadly speaking, prior to Immanuel Kant the prime question of philosophy was that of BEING, since his time it is that of KNOWING. After the question of knowing has been settled, the further question, Does our knowledge, or supposed knowledge, correspond with reality, arises? (We still hold, that truth is a correspondence between thought and reality.) Thus epistemology goes over into metaphysics, just as a system of metaphysics implies an epistemology. Our apology for reviewing briefly attempts to solve the epistemological problem lies in the fact that it is difficult to discover what kind of epistemology underlies the writings of Barth and his school, or whether indeed they have a well-defined theory of knowledge.

A. The Epistemological Problem

Two questions arise in epistemology: How do we know, What do we know? There are two views, broadly designated as *empiricism* and *intellectualism.*

1. Empiricism or Sensationalism

Under this view all knowledge is referred to experience as its source. All ideas are said to originate in sensation and are simply developed and transformed sensations. There are various forms of the theory. According to subjectivism, knowledge is merely subjective and relative and does not enable us to know directly an external object. According to empiricism all our knowledge comes from experience and is subject to the limitations of experience. It is only by an appeal to a deductive logic that empiricism reaches fact and truth. According to materialism, the soul is at most merely a vital force and thought a phosphorescence of the brain. In his great work *"An Essay Concerning Human Understanding?"* (Not The Human Understanding, etc., as often quoted, which would be a work on psychology), Locke was concerned in establishing the position that our ideas are derived from sensations and reflection, though it is generally held that he failed to define the function of each.

2. Rationalism or Intellectualism

Here the source of knowledge is regarded as primarily in the mind, though sensation is allowed to supply data. Time, space, causation are regarded as *a priori.*

Like Locke, Leibnitz also wrote a book on Human Knowledge *(Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendment Humain)*, in which he held that necessary truths have a place in the mind as habitudes, dispositions, faculties. He defines more clearly than had been done previously the difference between necessary truths and truths of experience and urges that the general truth is reached, not by mere spontaneity of mind, but by an intellectual process. Locke said: *Nihil est in intellectu, quod non fuerit in sensu* (Nothing is in the intellect which was not previously in the senses), to which Leibnitz by a clever *jeu d' esprit* added, *nisi ipse intellectus* (except the intellect itself), that is, there must be mind to get thought out of or into sensation.

If, according to empiricism, all our ideas spring from perception there can be not only no science of the supersensuous world, but not even of the objects of experience.

For perception, dealing only with the particular, not the general, has no criterion by which to unify knowledge and thus to reach necessary and universal truths. The very reasons advanced by empiricism for the possibility of knowledge, namely, the data of sense, prove the impossibility on any such basis. Hence empiricism in the old form ended in absolute scepticism.

On the other hand, pure intellectualism claimed to find in the clearness and necessity of ideas an infallible criterion of truth and in the processes of mathematics a safe example for philosophy. But it erred in both directions, for Spinoza and Leibnitz, the one the profoundest thinker, the other the greatest mathematician of his age, proceeding from alleged clear and necessary truths, reached diametrically opposite conclusions.

The empirical movement, beginning with Bacon, reached its culmination in Hume; the rationalistic principle, advocated already by Giordano Bruno, and developed by Descartes and Leibnitz, reached its full fruitage in Christian Wolff *(Logik, Ontologie,* 1754). Hume and Wolff form the climax of the development of the respective principles, the former precipitating the empirical philosophy into a complete and hopeless nihilism and the latter reducing all thought to a lifeless, formal, Aristotelian schematism.[1]

3. *Kant's Phenomenalism*

(1) Preliminary

This situation aroused Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) from his "dogmatic slumber" and led him to write three great works, *"The Critique of Pure Reason"* (1785), *"The*

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[1] Hume wrote: "The understanding, when it acts alone and according to its most general principles, **entirely subverts itself**, and leaves not the lowest degree of evidence in any proposition either in philosophy or in common life....We have no choice left but between a false reason and none at all."

Critique of Practical Reason," and *"The Critique of the Judgement"* (1790), generally referred to as first, second and third. Having written half a hundred books and pamphlets on science and philosophy as they then stood, he published in 1781 the first edition of the first Critique. The book remained unnoticed for several years but finally, resurrected by a Professor of Philosophy, it soon set all Europe ablaze. The burning question was: are you a Kantian, or an anti-Kantian? All classes, from laborers to court ladies, studied Kant. Men have ever since studied Kant and perhaps one of the best things for this age characterized by superficiality of thought would be to return to a study of Kant. Why? Because he stated the problem clearly, a problem that not one man out of a hundred understands today (not even the average minister or college professor) and indicated the direction in which a solution must be sought. Because, secondly, he once for all killed the vulgar rationalism and showed that men must fall back on faith, that is a religious *a priori*. But he laid the foundation, on the other hand, for nescience, infidelity, agnosticism, by denying that man can reach objective reality, the world outside himself, the spiritual, eternal world, in short God. As a result there arose Kantian schools of the right, the center, and the left. Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Lotze and others have wrestled with the epistemological problem with varying success. Progress has been made, but one hazards much in the affirmation that it has been solved.

(2) Kant And Barth

It may be said in passing that though Karl Barth and his school profess to come forward with a new theology or as they claim the old theology of Luther and Calvin in a new setting, their system, so far as it is a system, is first and last, through and through, a peculiar philosophy, consistent at some points, inconsistent and contradictory at others. Barth candidly states that immature minds had better not dabble with his *Roemerbrief*. Our own view is that no one, not even a minister, can understand what Barth is driving at unless he has a thorough grasp of the problems which philosophy (epistemology, metaphysics, ontology, ethics) undertakes to settle. The American mind having little use for the recondite questions of philosophy unless they have a practical twist, is unable to evaluate the "crisis," "dialectic," "transcendental," or whatever best characterizes the new theology. This is our apology for reviewing Kant and the philosophical questions underlying the Barthian movement.

The first Critique bristles with the words transcendentalism and transcendental. Of the 675 pages of the ordinary German edition the Transcendental Aesthetics covers 29 and the Transcendental Logic 431. Here are set forth the elements of pure knowledge and the necessary principles of thought. In the Introduction Kant lays down the position that while all knowledge begins with experience not all knowledge springs from experience. "*Macht zwar Verstand die Natur, aber er schafft sie nicht.* The understanding construes nature, but does not create it. Experience tells us what is, but not that it must be necessarily as it is. It therefore never gives us general truths, and our reason is roused rather than satisfied. General truths, bearing the character of an inward necessity, must be independent of experience and form knowledge *a priori,* while what is taken from experience is known *a posteriori,* or empirically. If we remove from experience everything that belongs to the senses, there remain certain original concepts, and certain judgements derived therefrom, which must have had their origin entirely *a priori.*

Kant accordingly holds that there are two stems of human knowledge which, perhaps, spring from a common root, unknown to us, namely sensibility and the understanding, objects being given by the former, thought by the latter. It follows that neither sensibility alone, nor the understanding alone can yield knowledge, for knowing is thinking about an object, a unifying of manifold objects. Thus Kant reaches his famous dictum: *Anschauungen ohne Begriffe sind blind* (perceptions without concepts are blind, i. e. unmeaning, incomprehensible), *Begriffe ohne Anschauungen sind leer* (concepts without perception are empty, i. e. without content). These two powers being mutually dependent, knowledge can arise only by their co-operation.

4. *The Epistemology of Pragmatism*

To understand pragmatism, one must recall its view of the soul. According to the old view of substantialism, the person is an abiding self, essentially though not empirically the same from day to day. The essence ever endures. The oak is the acorn in a different form. According to actualism, or phenomenalism, there is no such thing as soul or self; what is called the soul is merely a state of consciousness, or a stream of states, with no more personality than the Mississippi river. James, however, in his *Psychology* remarks that it is difficult to see how a man can be held responsible if the ego, or self is not an entity of some sort.

Pragmatism in its usual form accepts the actualistic view of the soul and the Heraclitic doctrine that nothing is fixed, but everything in eternal flux and flow. If nothing is fixed and permanent there are no *a priori* truths or postulates of thought. Everything is based on experience; faith and truth are in the making. The battle of Waterloo is still being fought. Truth can no longer be regarded as a correspondence between thought and reality, for there is no reality (God himself being in process of evolution). The truth of an assertion depends on its application or workability. Pragmatism attempts to avoid all transcendence and to make all knowledge "a thoroughly concrete process" (James).

It is obvious that the workability of a proposition can be known only at the end of experimentation; but to wait until the end of a series is generally impracticable, especially in a question of right or wrong. The judgements reached by pragmatism have no objective value or reality, but are mere value-judgments. Since you cannot on pragmatic premises prove that either Jesus or Buddha existed, it matters little on which one you place the higher value.

It is clear that such a line of thought undermines logic, psychology, epistemology, theology and the whole Christian system.

B. THE METAPHYSICAL PROBLEM

Assuming that we can know something, the question arises how is such knowledge related to reality? Here again are two opposing views, realism and idealism.

1. Realism

(1) Naive Realism

If you ask a man in the street, How he knows that yonder object is a house, he answers, "Don't I see it?" The perceived world is for him exactly the outer world.

(2) Hypothetical Realism

Here a duality of matter and mind, of the outer and the inner world is assumed (Reid, McCosh, the Scottish school generally). This is a more refined dualism than (1). Something more than the mere state of sensation and consciousness, is regarded as known.

2. *Idealism*

Reduced to its lowest limits, idealism is the doctrine that the only world known to us is that of consciousness. The external world is surmised but not susceptible of proof. *Esse est percipi* (Berkeley). There are many forms from Plato to the latest German philosophers.

While, epistemologically, idealism is the view that knowledge is of subjective-objective origin, due to the constitution of the mind, metaphysically it is the doctrine that spirit alone exists, ultimately, matter being merely phenomenal. Hence it tends to merge the individual self in the absolute. In a work by E. Hirsch on *"Die Idealistische Philosophie und das Christentum,"* reviewed by H. Barth, it is affirmed that "for idealism there is an essential unity between God and man." This, as will be seen later, is the reason why Karl Barth denounces idealism as a false attempt from the side of man to reach God. Though Barth rejects idealism it is not clear what special type of philosophy he accepts.

3. *The Metaphysics of Pragmatism*

Pragmatism involves metaphysics, as well as epistemology, i. e., it has a theory of truth as well as of knowledge. It is important to have a clear understanding of this, for Barthians, though not at all intending to teach pragmatism in the sense of "the Yankee" philosophy, comes perilously near holding that man has no way of reaching truth or reality. Truth "is an event, a process of verifying itself." (J. Dewey.) But how can truth be a verification? By the method of experimentation, not by starting with certain connate powers of the mind by which the experimentation can be conducted. Truth is either a process of verification (Dewey), or the concrete subjective steps and the actual presence in reality of the object which the idea denotes (W. James). *Reality* in the old sense is denied, everything being in transition. Does your thinking of your neighbor's headache imply something in *his* head as well as an idea in *your own?* If so, you have what is called transcendence. Pragmatists try to avoid transcendence and metaphysics.

Its central idea is that reality is not static and fixed, but dynamic and in process of becoming, even God coming under this category. Religion is not rooted in man by divine creation, but a human product valuable through its usefulness. Pragmatism cannot reach God, immortality, soul or any fixed principle in religion. Man's inability to reach truth is traced by Barth to his finiteness; by pragmatism to his changeableness. And yet Dewey allows a degree of permanence: "If the interactions and connections involved in natural occurrences were not sufficiently like one another, sufficiently constant and uniform, so that inference and prediction from one another were possible, control and purpose would be non-existent" *(The Quest for Certainty,* p. 248).

4. *Ideal Realism*

In the interest of condensation we discuss under the above head several views that are similar. According to one form of ideal-realism, the spiritual principle in man is one with the spiritual principle in the world. T. H. Green in the *Prolegomena to Ethics,* professes to develop this view to the exclusion of a pantheistic implication.

(1) The Spiritual Principle in Man and in the World

The major premise is, that self-consciousness is the path by which we reach reality. If there be an objective world of matter and force the Kantian principle that though sensation furnishes the material, the mind works it over, has elements of truth. Thus far idealism is correct, but it is wrong in holding that the conclusion is subjective and does not reach reality.

Dr. H. Bavinck, the Holland theologian, writes: "In self-consciousness we have to deal, not with a mere phenomenon, but with a *noumenon,* with *a reality that is immediately* given us, antecedently to all reasoning and inference. Self-consciousness is the unity of real and ideal being; the *self* is here *consciousness* of self as a reality. In self-consciousness our own being is revealed to us directly, immediately, before all thinking and independently of all willing. We do not approach it through any reasoning or any exertion of our own; we do not demonstrate its existence, we do not understand its essence" *(Philosophy of Revelation,* pp. 61–2).

Bavinck goes on to say that in consciousness the light dawns for us on our own being even as nature is revealed in the light of the sun. But more is revealed, namely, the outer world. Over against Greek scepticism Augustine discovered reality within himself. There he found thought alone. Underneath he penetrated to the soul, for life precedes thought, faith precedes knowledge, and self-consciousness, reflection. R. W. B. Joseph in his criticism of James remarks: "A mind which has no fundamental categories and whose experience was purely chaotic would not be a mind at all."[2]

Rudolph Otto in *Naturalistische und Religioese Weltansicht* points out three characteristics of psychic life: self-consciousness, the unity of consciousness and the consciousness of the ego. "Our consciousness is not merely a knowledge of individual things... We not only know but we know that we know... The same holds true of the unity of consciousness, of which we are directly convinced ... This unified *(einheitliche)* self-consciousness is consciousness of the ego... What the "I" is cannot be defined. It is that through which the relation of all experience and action is referred to a point through which the valuation is accomplished" (246–7). The reality of the ego or self is unquestioned.

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[2] "Der kritische Realismus oder realistische Idealismus bietet die beste und zutreffenste Lösung der erkenntnistheoretischen Problemen durch die Annahme einer erkennbaren Aussenwelt" (R. H. Grützmacher).

In short, self-consciousness bridges the gulf between thinking and being.[3]

(2) Scottish Philosophy and Neo-Realism

Abundant proof is forthcoming that the ego posits both itself and the reality of the external world. Kant's view that the *noumenon* can never be known, says Lange, in the *History of Materialism,* leads to materialism, just as he would probably say that Barth's view of the "Unknown God" leads to agnosticism. Prof. A. T. Ormond in two of his works remarks that the unknowableness of the thing-in-itself leads to empiricism and scepticism.

"The Scottish philosophy took the position that while certain principles of the mind, are operative in interpreting the nature and significance of every perception, we are nevertheless not deceived in such interpretations, inasmuch as there is a complete harmony between our nature and the nature of things...Prof. T. H. Green has further developed this idea and gives it more exact philosophic expression in declaring that the spiritual principle in man, constituting the unity of his consciousness is one with the spiritual principle of the world, which constitutes the law, the order and the harmony of the universe. The synthesis of these principles in perception assures the reality of our world of knowledge" (J. G. Hibben, *Problems of Philosophy,* p. 113).

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[3] It may be remarked in passing that Otto bases his argument for immortality on this reality of the self. "It appears out of the absolutely transcendental, associates itself with corporeal processes and in its own time passes back from this world of appearances to the transcendental again" (279).

Somewhat analogous to the preceding, though from a different side of approach is the Neo-Realism recently originating in America (vid., Holt, Marvin, Perry, Montague, Spaulding, Pitkin, in *the New Realism).* This system "goes back to that primordial common sense which believes in a world that exists independently of the knowing of it, but believes also that that same independent world can be directly presented in consciousness and not merely represented or copied by ideas," (p. 10).

This school opposes absolutism, subjectivism, and phenomenalism alike. "If there be no substance there can not be any state or accidents."

CHAPTER III

PRELIMINARY OUTLINE OF BARTHIANISM

A. Early Period

Although less than 15 years have elapsed since Barthianism first made its appearance it has passed through at least two, if not three, stages of development, not only in minor matters, but in fundamentals. As a young preacher seeking the best for his parishioners and a young university professor conversant with rapidly-changing post-war types of thought, not to mention adverse criticism on all sides, Barth saw fit to recast the second and later editions of the *Roemerbrief* on radically different lines than the first edition. Further study necessitated a modification of his earlier views. Barth states in the preface to the second edition of his major work that "some changes were due to further study of Plato and Kant and suggestions from Overbeck, Thurneysen, and his brother Heinrich Barth." He has made a life-study of theology and calls his book a conversation of a theologian with theologians. To "discard theology is an hysterical and thoughtless idea." He resents the imputation of Ragaz and his kind that the present work is "an undertaking of obdurate intellectual pride."

Then, again, the charge that he is an enemy of historical criticism, is misdirected. He accepts sane criticism, but deplores arbitrary, disintegrating methods; follows in the footsteps of Tholuck, Meyer, Weiss, Lipsius and Zahn, as well as Luther and Calvin as over against the modern liberal, positivist, and so-called historical schools. He alleges that his critics yield too much to Judaism and Hellenism, the personality of Paul and the Damascus retreat, as over against the true Biblical records. The meaning of Greek words is important, but more important the inner meaning of the context. He charges that critical New Testament exegetes do not give students what they need and can use in pulpit ministrations. The inner dialectic of the context is the divine factor in interpretation.

1. Traditional Reformation Standpoint

In the first period, approximately 1916–20, there is still a more or less direct assent to traditional Reformation doctrine, with however, a marked dissent and an endeavor to find a more satisfactory solution of theological and practical problems. "We must let conscience speak, for it tells of the righteousness of God in such a way that the righteousness becomes a certainty... There is above this warped and weakened will of yours and mine, above this absurd and senseless will of the world, another which is straight and pure, and which, when it once prevails, must have other issues than we see today... We stand here before the really tragic, the most fundamental error of mankind. We long for the righteousness of God, and yet we do not let it enter into our lives and our world... We build a tower of Babel... We have believed in an eternal life, but what we took for eternal life and satisfied ourselves upon was really only temporary... We make a veritable uproar with our morality and culture and religion. But we may presently be brought to silence, and with that will begin our true redemption... His (God's) will is not a corrected continuation of our own. It approaches ours as a *Wholly Other (ein Gänzlich Anderer).* There is nothing for our will except a basic re-creation. Not a reformation but a re-creation and a re-growth." *(WGuT.* pp. 5, 6, 8, 15, Horton's trans. pp. 10, 13, 14, 23, 24.)

In another address in 1916 on "The Strange World in the Bible" the idea of the *"Wholly Other"* is brought out more fully. "It is the Bible itself, the straight inexorable logic of its onmarch which drives us to reach out for the last highest answer... And that answer is a new world, the world of God... Once more we stand before this 'other' *(diesem Andern)* new world that which begins in the Bible. In it the chief consideration is not the right human thoughts about God which form the content of the Bible, but the right divine thoughts about men." It is the other, the quite other, *das ganz Andere,* the future, spiritual, eternal world which demands study.

That our author was interested in the practical affairs of life is seen in a remarkably clear and forceful address in 1919 on "The Christian's place in Society." Who is the Christian? "We must be agreed that we do not mean *the Christians,* not the multitudes of the baptized, nor with the chosen few who are concerned with religion and the social relations, nor the cream of the noblest and most devout Christians we might think of: the Christian is the Christ. The Christian is that within us which is not ourself but Christ in us... The relation between the 'Christ in us' and the world is not merely a matter of opening the sluices and allowing the ready water to stream over the thirsty land. Immediately we have all those combinations — social-Christian, social-evangelical, social-religious, and the like—but it is highly questionable whether the hyphens we draw with such intellectual courage do not really make dangerous "short-circuits.' "

There is always the possibility of 'patching the old garment with new pieces.' "Already there are signs in Protestant circles of a disposition to make the experiment. Let us establish a new church with democratic manners and socialistic motives. Let us build community houses, push our young people's program, organize discussion groups, plan special services of music. Let us step down from the high buskin of the clergyman and invite the laity into the pulpit... But for all our patches the old garment remains the old garment" *(Ibid,* pp. 34, 35, 38, Tr. pp. 273, 276, 289).

2. Veering Toward a New Position

In the remaining part of the above address Barth adroitly and cautiously develops his idea of the transtemporal, transcendent dynamic in religion. "Our concern is God, movement originating in God...and it is not religion. The socalled religious experience is wholly derived, secondary, fragmentary form of the divine. Even in its highest and purest examples, it is form and not content... The immediate, the Original, is never experienced as form. Experience is only a *reference* to the Original, to God. This (the mysterium tremendum) is not the act of man but the act of God in man. And for this reason, God in *consciousness* is actually God in *history* and no mere figment of thought. God causes something to happen, a miracle in our eyes *(Gotteskenntnis, kein blosser Bewusstseinsvorgang)*...The negation which issues from God, and means God, is positive, and all positives which are not built upon God are negative. When we seek God let us not be bewildered by the negative appearances of disintegration in ourselves and in the world" (*Ibid.,* pp. 41, 43, 48, tr., 285, 287, 294).

That Barth was influenced by radical writers is seen in the following: "Why must we at the crucial point, in spite of all our resistance, *give in* to the protests which *Kierkegaard* makes against marriage and the family, *Tolstoy* against the state, civilization and art, *Ibsen* against the approved bourgeois morality, Kutter against the whole structure of society, intellectual and material? Why can we work up no indignation against Dostojewski's daring to make Christ pass as an idiot in society and the real understanding of him begin with the murderer and the harlot" (61, tr. p. 315).

"What ought we then to do"? asks Barth in closing. Only one thing can be done. Interpret time in terms of eternity, in terms of God, not man, in terms of Christ, not Satan and lead the Christian in society "to follow attentively what is done by God."

B. LATER PERIOD

Quite another conception appears in the second and later editions of the *Roemerbrief*. The first edition "with its merits and defects now leaves the stage." Barth writes: "The position then won was carried forward to those more advantageous, and newly arranged and strengthened." A caustic critic, Heinzelmann, says that "Barth might well apologize to his readers for promulgating such false views regarding God and man."

1. Predestination; the Eternity-Time Relation

The idea that humanity can in time and in the ordinary course of history, even under God's providence, reach its goal this side of the grave is *abandoned absolutely* and the hypothesis propounded that *the only real history takes place in eternity* and is forecast through a double predestination or reprobation. Barth, to be sure, is too adroit and dialectic, to affirm in so many words what seems a pronounced determinism.

That predestination, foreordination, is taught in Scripture and that all things are included in the divine plan is regarded by Barth as a truism. Special things and events are decreed, as the stability of the physical universe, Is. 46:10, the circumstances of nations, Acts 17:26, the length of human life, Is. 14:5, the acts of men, good and bad, Is. 44:28; Gen. 50:20; especially Rom. 8:29, 30: "Whom he foreknew he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among brethren; and whom he foreordained, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified" (Rom. 8: 29–30).[1]

Logically and consistently Barth affirms that supralapsarianism is the proper term for his theory. "As the justification offered to the world in Christ (Eph. 1:4), so also the sin entering the world in Adam is the *timeless and the transcendental disposition of mankind (die zeitlose und die transzendentale Disposition der Menschenwelt),*" determining their relation to God (Rbr. p. 49).[2]

2. No Free Agency

Barth's theory of the nature of the will is necessarily a corollary of his double foreordination. He writes: "Man's will is and remains unfree; he lives and will live to the end of his days under the annihilating effect of the fall" (*WGuT.* pp. 148, 170, tr.). According to confessional Reformed doctrine two things are clearly taught in

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[1] "The totality of the descendants of Israel, stand, therefore, under the crisis of the above-described dualism of the Church, or otherwise expressed, the **dualism of predestination.** As to the Church there exists the eternal double predestination, resting in God alone, so that she, as descendent of Israel, elect or non-elect, as children of the flesh, friends or aliens, with the word of God in their mouth or on their lips, may be children of Jacob or children of Esau....In Christ, therefore, the crisis is most acute....God is free, kingly, sovereign, unconditioned (**unbedingt**), ungrounded (**grundlos**), uncaused and only thus is he to be conceived and revered....Because God is God and ever manifests himself as God, it follows that He, himself alone, elects or rejects (**verwirft**), exalts and casts down, makes alive or kills" (**Rbr.** pp. 328, 331).

[2] Barth adds: "The old Reformed thesis that the predestination to reprobation, preceding the historical fall, is to be regarded as supralapsarian, is well grounded (lässt sich durchaus hören und vertreten)" (Rbr. p. 150). It is to be noted that according to supralapsarianism, man is elected or reprobated before he is created. Barth writes: "The concept of God entertained by a theology of the Word of God must not only include in one form or another the idea of **Predestination,** but must make it central" (**Z. d. Z.,** Jahrg. 7, Heft 4, March 1929).

Scripture: God's sovereignty and man's free agency. Space forbids a discussion of the age-long riddle. Although it is not quite clear what Barth means by the declaration that the will is "unfree," it is proper to direct attention to the fact that the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans teaches that men were "without excuse, because that knowing God, they glorified him not as God, etc.," implying their responsibility. . . The denial of free agency weakens the sense of sin, guilt and retribution.[3]

In Barth's theory as developed finally in the *Roemerbrief* and in the *Prolegomena to the Dogmatik,* the Kingdom of God cannot be established upon the changing basis of the temporal world. Things eternal cannot take place or be explained in terms of time: in time everything is transitory, evanescent. Human history, as enacted by finite, short-sighted, even gifted men, runs its course, but comes to nothing permanent. According to the latest science there are no absolutely fixed laws; all is relativity; everything is in a Heraclitic flux and flow; nothing is static; not even God (if there be one). Einsteinism, relativity, empiricism are in possession of the field, but are not absolutely certain on all points.

How then can man even at his best reach ultimate and fundamental truth? He cannot. Therefore we are thrown back on Scripture, the Word of God, the only consistent, comprehensive, all-inclusive world-view worthy of consideration. All others have crumbled: pantheism, naturalism, pluralism, deism, or whatever combination of these has been suggested.

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[3] "There are three truths of which every man is convinced from the very constitution of his nature: (1) That he is a free agent; (2) That none but free agents can be accountable for their character or conduct; (3) That he does not possess ability to change his moral state by an act of the will.... Free agency is the power to decide according to our character; ability is the power to change our character by volition. The former, the Bible and consciousness affirm belongs to man in every condiition of his being; the latter, the Bible and consciousness teach with equal expliciteness does not belong to fallen man. These two things ought not to be confounded," (C. Hodge, **Systematic Theology,** II, p. 293).

3. Difference Between Eternity and Time the Organizing Principle

The difference between eternity and time in their relation to predestination is the organizing and dominating principle in the system under review. In 1916–21 Barth could still speak of "the reign of God as a certainty," of "a real re-creation in man," and "the Christ in the Christian." In 1916 he wrote: "Who is God? The heavenly Father. But the heavenly Father upon *earth,* and upon earth really the *heavenly* Father. He will not allow life to be split into a 'here' and 'beyond.' He will not leave to death the task of freeing us from sin and sorrow. . . What sort of eternity were it which should begin 'afterwards' " (*WGuT*. Tr. p. 48). In 1922, the same Barth wrote: "The impassable frontier of death, the unbridged chasm before which we are called to halt, is the boundary that separates and must separate God from the world, Creator from creature, the Holy One from sinners, the heavenly idea of the good from all its necessarily fragmentary and infinitely imperfect appearances. . . Would God be God if he met us in any other way?. . . And can man conceivably enter in to him except through the door of death and hell which is the perception of his remoteness from him, his condemnation by him and his powerlessness before him" (*WGuT*. p. 146, tr. 168). Here are two entirely different and irreconcilable world-views.

What apparently induced Barth radically to change his major premise? As the doctrine of God is basic, as time and eternity (even under the old view) belong to different categories, Barth brought the nature of God as transcendent to the cosmos, into relation with time as something absolutely different from eternity in the whole plan of the world and man's redemption. There being "an unending qualitative difference" between God and man, eternity and time, God, says Barth, must ever remain "unknown" to man. Even in revelation, in Scripture, and in Christ (as Barth actually teaches) God is *deus absconditus* (used in a different sense from that of Luther and Calvin) *God hidden.*

Let not the reader be tempted to suppose that, since God and man, time and eternity, have ever been regarded as different, the new view does not differ from the old. Barth means that time, and all things and acts in time, that all efforts of man, even the most worthy, laudable and spiritual, are fleeting and without permanent worth *(kein Werk,* auch das feinste und geistigste, auch nicht *ein negatives* Werk kann mehr in Betract kommen," (*Rbr.* p. 84), that a death-line *(Todeslinie)* separates this world from the next and that even faith is in the sight of God, *Hohlraum, a vacuum,* if not *Hybris, insolence.* Formerly, time was viewed as a preparation for eternity, now we are told eternity is a preparation for time.

It is evident, as Heinrich Barth allows, that the crisis theology is primarily a crisis philosophy, a new transcendental, world-view, embracing epistemology, metaphysics, ontology and cosmology. Dialecticism, paradoxism, Either-Orism, yesness and noness, the hereside and the yonside, thesis and antithesis (with a possible synthesis) are the logical and argumentative expedients to bolster up the new transcendentalism.

In itself this philosophy or theology would give us little concern were it not for the fact that it undertakes a reconstruction from the ground up of the chief subjects of theology: God, man, revelation, sin, Christ, redemption, predestination, free will, faith, the Church and Scripture; and for the further fact that it is set forth with no little acumen by sincere men of consecrated and prodigious scholarship, men who have the theologies and philosophies of all time at their fingers' end (Karl Barth, Gogarten, Brunner, Thurneysen, Knittermeyer, Heinrich Barth, Diem) all of whom though differing on minor points represent a type of thought demanding close, though not always easy, scrutiny.

4. *The Tremendous Scope of Barthianism*

A few more words on the tremendous scope of Barthianism. According to Barth, his theory is but a legitimate and necessary development of the *sola fide* of Luther and the *soli Deo Gloria* of Calvin formulated in terms of the accepted philosophy of today, just as the Reformation creeds, catechisms and confessions, Lutheran and Reformed, were formulated in terms of the Anselmic philosophy. And as Luther's Aristotelianism and Calvin's Platonism were no hindrance, but rather a help to their theology, so the problems of theism and theology imply at bottom a philosophy of one kind or another; and yet, strangely enough Barth and Barthians generally regard reason as the high *a priori* (or *a posteriori*) road to agnosticism, infidelity and atheism.

It is to Barth's credit that he has made the question of a living God of supreme importance in the face of the contemporaneous cry of "a new God, a finite God, a democratic God, no God." Unfortunately he has gone to the other extreme and declared that God is so far off and transcendent that he cannot even be apprehended much less comprehended by man. In 1919 he wrote: "The step from the experience of Jehovah to the experience of Baal is a short one, altogether too short, *All zu klein." (WGuT.* p. 42, tr. 286.)[4] In short, God is the Wholly Other.

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[4] Barth said previously: "Christ is the absolutely **new from above**...the Son of man in whom humanity becomes aware of its immediacy to God (**"ihrer Unmittelbarkeit zu Gott"**). This expression is significant as over against some of Barth's followers, who deny immediacy.

But if God be unknown, if the *deus revelatus* is a *deus absconditus,* how can there be a revelation at all? Here the good Homer nods. Here Barth offers no satisfactory explanation; it is a question whether he can, for in his scheme, a revelation of God in time and in history is an impossibility. How can the Infinite descend to the finite? How can the finite comprehend the Infinite? *Finitum non capax infiniti,* is Barth's constant assevoration. Even Jesus of Nazareth remains hidden behind "the Christ form and has no existence on the plane known to us" (Rbr. p. 5). According to Barth "There can never be a union of God and man. The Unknown and Invisible, with whom we have to do in the person of Jesus, does not become history" (H. W. Schmidt). Hence no revelation.

Only a few more points need be mentioned in this preliminary survey. Involved in his sharp contrast between time and eternity is scepticism of positive worth in religion, faith, ethics, justification, and pious life. In his zeal for the objective, Barth sees little value in the subjective, experimental side of religion and rarely refers to the time-honored Reformation doctrine of religious education and educational religion.

5. *Karl Barth and the Barthian School*

Although Karl Barth protests that his theology is strictly not a system, but rather a movement or tendency, "marginal notes," as he modestly says, his view-point, standpoint, or whatever term is most expressive, has enlisted such a considerable body of scholars of rank, that whether or not the word "school" is altogether appropriate, it is employed here to denote a group of a dozen or so men, who, with individual differences, agree in the main with Barth. They are authors of books and phamphlets and contributors to the "*Zwischen den Zeiten,*" (the official mouth-piece, now in its eighth year), a publication bristling with scholarly articles and book-reviews on underlying problems in religion, ethics, philosophy and theology. As we shall have occasion to refer to these men we subjoin a brief sketch or notice of each.

KARL BARTH. He was born May 10, 1886, in Basel, Switzerland. His father was professor of theology in Bern, where Karl was a pupil in the Gymnasium until 1904. From 1904–8, he studied theology in Bern, Berlin, Tuebingen, and Marburg. He came under the influence of Adolf Harnack and Wm. Herrmann (Marburg). In 1908–9 he was associate editor of Rade's *"Christliche Welt,"* then assistant pastor of the German Reformed Church in Geneva, and beginning in 1912 pastor in Safenwil, Canton Aargau. The first edition of the *Römerbrief* appeared in 1919. In 1921 he was appointed Honorary Professor of Reformed Theology in Göttingen. Later he became professor of Theology in the University of Münster in Westphalia. He received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Glasgow in July 1930. A list of his writings is given in our Preface.

EDUARD THURNEYSEN. Is a Reformed pastor near St. Gall, Switzerland, who writes largely on practical subjects, such as catechetical instruction and Biblical study. The joint authorship of Barth and Thurneysen of a book of sermons, in which it is impossible to distinguish the writer of each, reveals the similarity of spirit and view-point. His *Dostojewski* is regarded as a resumé of Barth's *Römerbrief*. In the second edition of the *Römerbrief* Barth expresses in warm terms his indebtedness to Thurneysen. The student days of both ran parallel, and both speak of having been influenced by Franz Overbeck, also by Wilhelm Herrmann of Marburg.

FRIEDRICH GOGARTEN. Is an *echt Deutscher,* pastor of a Lutheran church near Jena, a lecturer at the university and a staunch supporter of Barth. He has probed the fundamental epistemological and philosophical presuppositions of Barthianism in a masterly manner. His articles are largely metaphysical. He has a wholesome contempt for writers who constantly employ such words as 'subjective,' 'objective,' 'subjective-objective,' without first carefully explaining their meaning. He is a positive, incisive dogmatician, claiming that Barth is sustained in his main positions by Luther, though this is challenged by other Lutherans (as Burgdorf). He speaks for an academic rather than a popular audience, and is regarded abroad as the equal of Barth and Brunner in analytical power. His *"Ich Glaube an den Dreieinigen Gott,"* is a thorough discussion of faith and history; his *"Von Glauben und Offenbarung,"* treats of revelation and the *"Glaube und Wirklichkeit,"* discusses the Word of God and faith. He holds that the dialectic theology starts with faith, not doubt.

Emil Brunner. Was born in the middle nineties, received his academic education in the University of Zurich, and became pastor in a Reformed church of that city. In 1923 he was appointed Privatdocent in the University and was promoted from time to time until at present he is Ordentlicher Professor there.[5]

Though in his early ministry an admirer of Schleiermacher, he was led through deeper study to more independent views and in the *Erlebnis, Erkenntnis und Glaube*" exposes the growing tendency to attach undue significance to *experience* in religion (James), and the *Kulturprotestantismus* of Troeltsch and Bousset, representatives of the view of a false immanence rather than a true transcendence of God. Brunner established his theological reputation in Germany by his "*Die Mystik und das Wort,*" in which "the basic ideas of mysticism in all Schleiermacher's theological works" and "the antithesis between faith in the word of God and the faith of man in himself" *(Vorwort)* are revealed. It is a masterpiece of cogent reasoning (even though Barthians in general condemn reason and metaphysics). "*Der Mittler,*" is an elaborate treatise (565 octavo pages) on the thesis that Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man and that the antithesis in religion reaches its climax at one point: the mystic-idealistic-moralistic universal religion, which lays no claim to a concrete, specific revelation and the Christian faith in a once-for-all revelation in Christ (p. 9). Possibly, if a student, wishing to get Brunner's view-point as a whole and were limited to one book, he would best be served by the "*Religionsphilosophie Evangelischer Theologie,*" which discusses the philosophy of religion, rationalism, revelation, the Bible, history and the canon. Other works are listed in our Preface. "*The Theology of Crisis,*" is an able and profound philosophical discussion valuable for professors of philosophy and theology, but unintelligible to the general reader and therefore disappointing. Moreover, it adroitly conceals the inexplicable Barthian dualisms between God and man, Christ and Jesus, revelation and history, the Bible as a work of man like any other book and not in itself the word of God and the Church as at once founded by Christ, but now the synagogue of Satan. A learned and distinguished President of a theological seminary, and himself a master of diction and clever dialectics, has written a commentary thereon, embracing some of Brunner's unobjectionable views, but omitting altogether his negations, e. g., his bold rejection of the fourth gospel "as an historical source and finding legends in many parts of the synoptic gospels." How can there be proof of a revelation in Jesus Christ if the authenticity and credibility of Scripture be denied?

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[5] Brunner like Barth gradually came to change his viewpoint. Like Troeltsch he began his theological career as a Ritschlian, "as most of us did" (**TH.** p. 7). "Als Brunner, 1914, sein Buch **Das Symbolische in der religioesen Erkenntnis** schrieb, war er noch ein Verehrer des grossen Erneuerers der Theologie aus dem Anfang des vorigen-Jahrhunderts. Das religiöse Gefühl, das fromme Selbstbewusstsein, ist dann auch für ihn noch durchaus das Primäre, das im Bekenntnis und im Dogma seine symbolische Auslegung findet. Zugleich zeigt sich, dass Brunner mit grossem Interesse die Arbeiten von Henri Bergson kennen gelernt hat, insonderheit seine hohe Wertschätzung der Intuition in der Erkenntnistheorie gegenüber der diskursiven Erkenntnis des Verstandes" (Th, L. Haitjema, **Karl Barths** Kritische Theologie, p. 105).

ADOLF BULTMANN, professor of New Testament theology in Marburg and a Lutheran, is a staunch Barthian and a frequent contributor to *Zwischen den Zeiten.* His articles take high ground against the current false psychological-historical method, psychologism and historism, as well as the new humanism. He is the author of a number of books on the New Testament, the latest, his "*Jesus,*" one of a series on "*The Immortals,*" heroes of mankind, though by a strange inconsistency Bultmann finds less of the historical in Jesus than in some others, in fact we know really nothing *(Wirklich nichts")* of the life and personality of Jesus. "*Der geschichtliche Jesus ist gleichgültig.*" Similar negations, though more cautiously expressed, occur in articles in Z. d. Zeiten. Even for Jesus God is "*Der ferne und zukünftige Gott.*"

HEINRICH BARTH, a brother of Karl, is a professor of philosophy in Basil and though not directly supporting the crisis theology, writes on philosophical subjects, which enables him to launch broadsides against Idealism, the *bête noire* of Barthianism. He is the author of a scholarly and discriminating book on "*Die Philosophie der Praktischen Vernunft,*" which, though according high value to Kant, also recognizes the supposed advanced position of the Neo-Kantian school of Cohen and Natorp. In an article on "*Das Problem der Willensfreiheit,*" in *Zwischen den Zeiten* he writes that the problem of the will is a problem of both psychology and metaphysics which "according to P. Natorp's discriminating discussion ought to be more and more recognized." All our acts imply continuity. "The relation runs further and further back and enables us to regard life from first to last as permeated by the strictest continuity." Nevertheless he opposes determinism and yet writes: *"Sollte an uns die einfache Entscheidungsfrage gerichtet werden: Ist der Wille frei? so müsste sie mit einem Nein beantwortet werden."* (Z. d. Z. IV, p. 330.) Karl Barth says that man is "unfree" (see page 29) and Heinrich agrees with him. If a man should choose the good it would be a divine foreordination *("So dürfte es doch nicht völlig unverständlich bleiben, dass wir im tun des Guten nicht die Wirkung des bedingenden ICH, sondern den Akt der göttlichen Erwählung anerkennen"* (ibid, p. 332).

Hinrich Knittenmeyer, a follower of Natorp and Librarian in Bremen, is a frequent contributor to Zwischen den Zeiten and the author of *"Die Philosophie und das Christentum,"* which is perhaps the clearest and most comprehensive reflection of the philosophic side of Barthianism extant (surpassing in this regard Brunner and Heinrich Barth). Philosophy is as necessary to man as his daily bread, but can be of service to theology only when it breaks the bondage of man to himself and leads to God. The real conflict is not between philosophies, but between God and man. The self must first of all be grounded as self; otherwise philosophy cannot bridge the chasm between the self and the outer world. "Not without reason do we follow Kant in the final analysis. Practical philosophy was for him in its development a new triumph of the theistic philosophy." Knittenmeyer is concerned to state the philosophical categories along the Neo-Kantian lines of the Marburg school; but such problems as philosophy cannot solve are to be handed over to Christian faith. Philosophy ends in contradiction. We have the Gospel; what is the need of philosophy? Because we are foolish and sinful creatures and want *knowledge*. Reason refutes itself and we ought to know it. Accordingly something *higher* than reason, the transcendental, is necessary.[6]

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[6] "Ist nicht der Widerspruch das Ende der Philosophie?...Freilich ist die Philosophie nichts, dessen man sich rühmen könnte. Und insofern haben die Zweifler von vorhin formell ganz recht: was bedarf es der Philosophie, wenn wir das Evangelium haben? Aber so liegt die Sache ja nicht; offenbar haben wir das Evangelium, weil wir **toerichte und suendige Menschen sind.** Und weil wir das sind, haben wir Erkenntnis und Philosophie. Das zu haben ist ja gar nicht in unsere Wahl gestellt. Philosophiren ist nicht etwas, das wir lassen können, so wenig wir lassen können, unser tägliches Brod zu essen. **Etwas** anders freilich liegt die Sache mit der Philosophie innerhalb dieser rückhaltslos anzuerkennenden Sachlage nun freilich doch: denn die Philosophie scheidet uns erst von der Natur. **Sie** macht erst, dass wir als selbst unser tägliches Brot essen. Sie vermittelt die Geschichte." (p. 140).

W. KOLFHAUS. Is a theologian who writes with an uncommonly clear grasp of the inner character of Barthianism. In "*Die Botschaft des Karl Barth,*" 1927, he treats the Barthian movement as not the only one in the Church, but the one which "augenblicklich in allen Lagern und Kirchen gespürt wird." It is not merely a tendency, but a strenuous agitation, to recognize God as the living God, with the incalculable implications of this fact.

Among other scholars who contribute to *Zwischen den Zeiten* and are more or less closely identified with the movement the following may be mentioned: Paul Burckhardt, Georg Merz, Herman Diem, Hans Asmussen, Karl Hartenstein, Erwin Reisner, Wilhelm Loew.

Karl Barth and Barthians generally are students of Plato, Augustine, Anselm, Luther, Calvin, Kant, Fichte, Kierkegaard, Dostojewski, Tolstoy, Ibsen, Nietzsche, Natorp, Cohen, Kutter, Ragaz, Wm. Hermann.

PART II

BARTHIAN DUALISMS

CHAPTER IV

A COSMIC-ESCHATOLOGICAL DUALISM TIME AND ETERNITY

I

BARTH'S CHIEF POINTS

Barth employs the term eschatology to denote the last things, not in this world, but in the unending next. There are two worlds (eons): the present, temporal, spatial, materialistic world of nature and of man: and the future, timeless, spiritual, eternal, transcendent world. Barth's system is therefore a dualism, but altogether different from the dualisms of history. It is difficult to find a name for this conception. As it implies a thoroughgoing contrast between the present physical and the future non-physical world, it may be called a *Cosmic-Eschatological Dualism.*

A. The Present or Time-World

The thought of the qualitative difference between eternity and time is fundamental with Barth and is in a large degree the organizing principle in his system. "A drop of eternity has more weight than the ocean of things taking place in time" (*Rbr.* p. 51). On Romans 3:21–6, he writes: "But now..., we stand before a vast, irresistible, dissolution of the world of time, of things and of men, before an overwhelming final crisis, before a consummation of all things through its superior not-being. World is world. We know now what this means. Whence this crisis? Whence the possibility to call the world, world? Whence many other possibilities"? (*Rbr.* p. 66.) Again, "Everything in the life of Abraham (and of others like him) stands yet this side the death-line, *Todeslinie* [this word and thought runs through the whole of the *Rbr.*] which separates time from eternity, man from God, even if it gives ever so great a proof of the yonside...Beyond the death-line is God, known as the unknown, speaking in his silence" (*Rbr.* p. 95).

The same thought runs through *WGuT*. In a paper on *"The New World in the Bible,"* we read: "He [God] has caused eternity to dawn in time, or rather upon time—for what sort of eternity were it which should begin 'afterwards.' He purposes naught but the establishment of a *new world*" (*ibid,* p. 31). "Resurrection means eternity. Since it is the sovereignty of God which gives significance to time, it is for that very reason not in time. It is not one temporal thing among others. What is in time has not yet reached the boundary of death, has not yet been taken under the government of God. It must yet die in order to enter into life. The moment when the last trump is sounded, when the dead shall be raised and the living shall be changed, is not the last moment of time, but is time's *telos,* its non-temporal limit and end...Resurrection means the NEW WORLD, the world of a new quality" (*WGuT.* p. 95).

Barth describes this age or world in deprecatory, contemptuous terms. It is characterized by low life, false pleasure, false love *(eros* and *libidos),* sexuality as foul and rotten as ever cursed Corinth *(corinthia,* a prostitute) or Babylon. Such conditions imply transitoriness, death, the absence of true art, culture, morality, religion.

B. THE FUTURE, OR ETERNAL WORLD

In contrast with the present world, in endless qualitative difference, in fundamental antithetic relation is the NEW WORLD, the new world of the living God. That is the real world, the only world of true life. It is radically different from the present world: is absolute, not relative; real, not contingent; the wholly OTHER, the immaterial, spiritual, eternal world, not subject to dissolution.

"The new man exists. This fact falls, not in time, but in eternity, which limits time. If it is sought a thousand times, it is found and bestowed once for all. The question is the answer. The spirit is that, which as its NO releases the knowledge of man from himself...He is as this NO, the limit, the reality of human life...He is thus the YES, of the yonside of this limit, the new reality" (*Rbr.* p. 255).

"Therefore the temporal time, the spaceless place, the impossible possibility, the light from uncreated light, are revealed in the divine kingdom, in which the message of the YES in the NO, of deliverance in the world, of pardon in judgment, eternity in time, life in death, is validated."

Abraham's faith, as indeed all faith, takes place in eternity. "It has a pure trans-temporal beginning *(einen reinen jenseitigen Anfang)*. Nowhere is it identical with the historical and psychological visibility of the religious experience. Nowhere does it run parallel with the continuous development of human existence, having and doing...To the extent that we ignore the relation of temporal things to their eternal origin, we force them into the sphere of a destructive, practically irredeemable scepticism" (*Rbr.* pp. 103, 111).

Eternity enters time. "There remains between these two pure negatives, that is, this side and the yonside, or death and not-being, only the impossibility of the minus times plus; the relation of the two negations to each other, the annulment of the one through the other, of the meaning and force of both, their original position. The 'living' must die in order that the 'dead' may be made alive; the existing must be recognized as non-existing, in order that the non-existing may be addressed as existing" (*Rbr.* p. 118)—a characteristic Barthian paradox.

1. This Is The New Testament View

Barth discovers his view in the New Testament. "*The affirmation of God, man and the world given in the New Testament is based exclusively upon the possibility of a new order absolutely beyond human thought; and, therefore, as prerequisite to that order there must come a crisis that denies all human thought.* To understand the New Testament yes as anything but the Yes contained in the No, is not to understand it at all. Life comes from death. Death is the source of all" (*WGuT.* p. 89). "It is this that I call the Bible's other-worldliness, its unhistoricalness, its antipathy to the idea of sacredness. God is the new, incomparable, unattainable, of not only heavenly, but more than heavenly interest, who has drawn the regard of the men of the Bible to himself" (*WGuT.* p. 84).

This future world, says Barth, is not a mere continuation of the present; it cannot be, for God, the King, and All-wise, is God. The future world is an absolute *Novum,* an absolute miracle, and, though strictly trans-temporal, is not placed in ontologically rigid contrast with the present. All things in the existing world, nature, history, man, imply something preceding and something following as explanation. Neither from the side of science, nor of philosophy has this cosmos any definite origin, goal, meaning or destiny. Whence it came (except from stardust), why it is here, whither it is tending, why there is such a thing as man (whether he came from an amoeba or God), what his destiny, science does not explain. It has no teleology, theodicy, comprehensive world-view, but merely a conjecture that things are as they always have been and always will be, an unending play and inter-play of some impersonal force or energy. But according to

Barth, as we understand him, a time will come when one might say: "La farce est jouée."

Over against this dreary outlook, Barth comes forward with his revolutionary theory and program, that God is God, inhabiting the endless cycles of eternity, the Creator of stars, suns, life and man (all the hosts of heaven, distant thousands upon thousands of light-years) and though having highly endowed man, must necessarily view him and all his works as of little value relatively, none intrinsically. These things that are seen are temporal, the things unseen are eternal.[1]

2. This the Keynote to Barth's System

In the preface to the second edition of the *Römerbrief Barth,* in answering his critics, writes: "What do I mean by saying that the inner-dialectics of the context is the divine factor in interpretation? They charge that I mean simply my own system. If I have a SYSTEM, it is as says Kierkegaard, the infinite qualitative difference between time and eternity, which in the negative and positive sense is ever kept in mind...God is in heaven, man on earth. The relation of God to man, of man to God, is for me the theme of the Bible and the sum of philosophy. Philosophers regard human wisdom, the Bible regards Jesus Christ, as the *fons et origo*" (P. XIII).

Barth continues: "In interpreting Romans, I assume that Paul was conscious of such relationship and that I am merely stating it. . . Whether my assumption is justified will appear from my interpretation of the epistle as a whole and of its several parts. . . If my assumption is false, if Paul really spoke of something else than *the permanent crisis of time and eternity* I should be led by the text itself to an absurdity (Hat Paulus wirklich von etwas anderem geredet als von der permanenten Krisis von Zeit und Ewigkeit, nun dann werde ich mich ja im Verlauf *seines Textes ad absurdum führen)*. P. XIV. If one were to ask, finally, why I start with just this postulate, I should answer, God is God. Although not claiming to have explained everything satisfactorily, I have found no reason to recede from my starting-point. Paul knew something about God that we do not know. That I know Paul knew this is my system, my 'dogmatic presupposition,' my 'Alexandrianism,' or however one may designate it (Das ist mein System, meine 'dogmatische Voraussetzung, mein 'Alexandrianismus,' und wie man es immer zu nennen vermag")

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[1] Not a little confusion arises from Barth's twofold meaning of "temporal." Agreeing with Kierkegaard, he regards the "eternal" as absolutely different from the "temporal." Does this include moral and religious acts? No definite answer is forthcoming. Acts and events in time, as war, business, the acquisition of property are temporal absolutely. The fruits of the Spirit, as peace, Christian love have a qualitative value. Barth constantly states that all human striving is negative, valueless. If this be true, even after imparted grace and forgiveness (as the context usually implies), would it not lead to indifference, despair, possibly pessimism? One might ask, If all human striving is vain (Hohlraum), why strive at all?

In short there is a Thisside, and a Yonside; but the Yonside is the real side. Time is one thing, eternity another. The two are incommensurable. In the hands of Barth and Brunner this conception at one tremendous sweep becomes a philosophy of history, a cosmology, teleology, theodicy, metaphysics and theology.

II.

EXAMINATION OF THE COSMIC-ESCATOLOGICAL DUALISM

A. The Biblical Background

In general Barth's representation of time and eternity has a Biblical background. As the Jews distinguished *haolam hazzeh,* the time before the Messiah and *haolam habba,* the time after the advent of the Messiah, so most of the New Testament writers distinguish *ho aion houtos,* this age, the time before the appointed return or truly Messianic advent of Christ, the period of instability, weakness, impiety, wickedness and the *aion mellon,* the future age, i. e., the age after the return of Christ in majesty, the period of the consummate establishment of the divine kingdom and all its blessings (Thayer, *Lexicon*).

These two ages are sometimes mentioned together in Scripture. "It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world *(aion)* nor in the world *(aion) to come,"* Matt. 12:32. "He shall receive a hundred fold in this time *(kairos)* and in the world *(aion)* to come eternal life," Mark 10:30. "Above every name that is named, not only in this world *(aion),* but also in that which is to come," Eph. 1:21. The "things present" and the "things to come" of Romans 8:38, refer to these two ages. There are many other passages of like import.

The New Testament Greek employs various terms to denote kinds of time, the most important being *kairos, chronos and aion.* Kairos, means season, opportunity. Chronos, the generic term, denotes a space-world. Aion, occurring over a hundred times in the New Testament, is always sharply distinguished from chronos. Etymologically it means a circle, cycle, an age, duration (of greater or less extent) and since a circle has neither beginning nor end it comes to denote eternity, just like the Hebrew OLAM. This age has a beginning and an end, the next age (eternity *post*) has no end.[2]

1. *Significance of the Barthian Contention*

Without discussing here the ontological character of time, space and eternity (the question of absoluteness and relativity) we may state more in detail what the full scope of the Barthian contention is. In several of his larger works Dr. Emil Brunner brings out the underlying thought more elaborately than Barth himself.

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[2] Rev. 10:6, rendered in the A.V. "there shall be time (chronos) no longer" is now rendered "there shall be delay no longer," thus deleting the only Scripture passage formerly cited to prove that time shall be no more. In Enoch 33:2; 65:6, absolute cessation of time is predicted.

In his 400 page octavo volume on *"Mysticism and the Word (Die Mystik und das Wort,* Der Gegensatz zwischen moderner Religionsauffassung und christlichem Glauben dargestellt an der Theologie Schleiermachers), Brunner undertakes to prove that Schleiermacher's pantheistic mysticism or mystical pantheism is "the most subtle and sublime form of the deification of the creature" in all literature and the source of the pseudo-theology, pseudo-psychology, pseudo-religious education of the day. It all arises from a false conception of God and man, time and eternity.

In Schleiermacher there is "no qualitative difference between faith and unbelief, but merely the quantitative more or less...The Reformation conception of faith stands in sharp contrast with that of Schleiermachers Glaubenslehre. Not the *quantum,* but the direction, the *quale* is decisive. Faith and unbelief are related to each other, not as different quantities or different grades of the same material, but as opposites, the antithesis of Yes and No. Between an affirmative and a negative there is no gradual transition. There are transitions in time, space, and nature, but not in spirit." (*MuW*. p. 164.)

Brunner devotes a whole chapter to the eschatological problem, *(Das Eschatologische Loch)* and another to the philosophy of history, in which the Barthian theory of time and eternity is elaborately set forth. Quoting Calvin's teaching that the certainty of faith rests upon the expectation of eternal life which is placed beyond doubt in the Word of God and Luther's avowal that "In these two words, HOPE and LORD, the sum of the whole Christian doctrine is contained, which is grounded, not in experience, but in hope," Brunner writes that "the whole New Testament conception is eschatologically oriented.... Faith means a hope for the kingly rule of God, for the new *eon,* the world of God, where *patchwork* and sorrow cease. It is significant that this so manifest a fact needed to be discovered and appreciated by a special eschatological school [the Barthian]. Modern theology, following Schleiermacher, has developed a notion of faith, according to which the eschatological is regarded as an historical *Kuriosum,* as a purely temporal and historically conditioned appendage of truly religious motives...The New Testament, however, is from cover to cover eschatological, not because such ideas were possibly imported into Judaism from Persia, but because faith implies eschatology, just as the term man implies a head. History is the scene of relativities. Faith has to do with the absolute. Therefore it is directed, not to history, but to the end of history." (Pp. 257–8).

2. Redemption Not In This Life, But In The Next

Such is the nature of faith in contrast with humanism, mysticism and psychologism. Faith views the whole historical life with its *ups* and *downs,* its limitations to time, place and occasion as an intermediate realm and is realistic enough to hope for redemption, not in this life, but beyond it. [But "he that believeth on me hath eternal life."] "The end of this realm intermediate between the original divine economy and eternal consummation, the end of the *aion houtos,* the *finis hujus saeculi,* this it is which faith means by the word redemption, or hope" (p. 258).

Quoting Luther to the effect that all God's works are paradoxical *(im Widerspiel),* which reason, not understanding, regards as *"nichts und erlogen,"* Brunner comments thus: "To the transcendental idealism of justification there corresponds the transcendental realism of redemption. To the paradoxical *promissio Dei* there corresponds the miracle of the *new world* and the resurrection of the dead" (p. 259).

The Barthian theology is a Yonside, not a Thisside theology. The latter is at bottom un-Christian. Over against Schleiermacher's statement that "in pious exultation the soul is absorbed in the present more than in the future," Brunner quotes Luther's Easter Hymn and declares that there could be no greater contrast between the Biblical Reformation faith and mysticism than that exhibited by Schleiermacher and that we now see "What an abyss yawns between the transcendence of faith and the *immanence* of mysticism" (p. 264).

Brunner allows that Schleiermacher's teaching leaves no doubt as to man's immortality as shown by such passages as the following: "If any one should seriously affirm, that all the relevant utterances of Christ are figurative, non-literal and should claim for himself no personal undyingness, a faith in Christ as here described would still be possible." This means, says Brunner, "that neither faith in Christ, nor belief in our own personal immortality is essential in Christianity." (p. 269.) This means also that Schleiermacher interprets the New Testament arbitrarily in the very matter that is in fact one of the most undoubted teachings of the New Testament; belief and certainty of eternal life. The world lies in sin and needs redemption, even though not all would go as far as Luther, who calls the world "*des Teufels Gliedmass,* or say with Calvin: *Conscientia* infelicitatis, miserabilis haec ruina, in quam nos dejecit primi hominis defectio," (p. 271). We must choose between Luther and Calvin on the one hand and Schleiermacher on the other, whose *Glaubenslehre* is at bottom a new, and profoundly conceived theodicy, the aim of which is to prove that this world as now constituted is in a deeper than the Leibnitzian sense the best possible world. In short, Schleiermacher, in the face of all Scripture, magnifies the present world and minimizes the future, eternal world.

3. Schleiermacher's Philosophy of History

True to his pantheistic premises Schleiermacher develops with logical consistency a naturalistic evolutionism and, according to Dilthy, says Brunner, is to be placed alongside of Herbert Spencer as the formulator of an all-inclusive evolutionistic philosophy. Evolutionism is ever an attempt to regard the world of facts and the world of principles, the known and the not-known as one, in-so-far as this unity is not assumed through simple denial of a world of principles, as in the monism of Haeckel or Ostwald. "Evolutionism in whatever form is therefore in principle monistic. From the side of a world view which seriously accepts the antithesis of the given and the not-given, evolutionism, even in its purest idealistic form, must be regarded as an attempt to NATURALIZE spirit" (p. 277).

Brunner directs attention to the fact that recently prominent historians and philosophers have, on various grounds, denied the possibility of a philosophy of history. Whatever the reason, it would seem clear that in a monistic, deterministic, behavioristic system, freedom of the will being denied, real history is impossible. Scientific world-views and philosophies of history as presented today are dominated by a naturalistic, anti-Christian philosophy from the ground up and are accordingly irreconcilable with the Christian faith.

Redemption comes from the Yonside. "Redemption means redeemed from the kingdom of history, from the *aion houtos* which, irrespective of all historical development, is fundamentally the same, the place where sin and death are unconquerable, from which no developmental process can deliver us" (p. 297). If, as Schleiermacher holds, the individual is only "a transient phenomenon, one of the many waves in the stream of life, of evolution," only the species continues in the next world and there can be no personal immortality. If the self is the product of the bodily organism, it will disintegrate at death. "We see accordingly that Schleiermacher's negative attitude toward the eternity-faith is a necessary corollary of his system" (p. 317).

4. *Is the Physical Universe Eternal or Temporal?*

That God from eternity purposed to create the cosmos is not disputed by one who regards God as the Supreme Personality. But according to current science and an identity philosophy the physical universe is eternal. This means that time and eternity run into each other, that the old doctrine that time began with creation must be abandoned for the obvious reason that there was no beginning of creation.

The crisis question therefore arises: Are Barth, Thurneysen, Gogarten, Brunner and in fact the whole Barthian school correct in their contention that the Biblical representation that time had a beginning, that time and eternity are distinct categories, in short that unless this distinction is rigidly carried out, Christianity is no longer Christianity in its fundamental principles, but pantheism, not a "higher," but a "low," very low pantheism, in fact naturalism through and through? *Barthians here are correct and contend for a fundamental truth.*

5. *The Divine Plan From Eternity*

In the current doctrine of evolution it is difficult to discover any definite plan or goal, even though some sort of design be allowed in the cosmic processes. Man is only an animal, indeed merely an accident. In the Biblical system, all world-history leads to the establishment of a kingdom of God upon earth (Eph. 1:4, 10; 1 Cor. 2:7). God's world-plan is eternal, formed before "The foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4).[3] Much is implied in this, chiefly that all things visible came into existence through a creative God. Origen assumed an eternal creation of countless worlds, some before, some after ours. Modernists in claiming that God created the universe in eternity have not in principle advanced beyond Origen. From the time of Spinoza, the newer philosophy and theology have tended more and more to the view of an eternal creation; and naturally so, for in the Spinozistic and latest "modernist" philosophy and theology, God, man and the universe are one; hence the eternity of the physical universe is assumed; so, too, in false evolutionism.

What can be the meaning of the proposition that God created the universe in eternity? If the meaning be that God from eternity purposed to create, there is no dispute. The objection, however, takes the form that not only the plan, but its execution took place in eternity. A common form of the argument is that of Rothe, who held that God in positing his ego or self, must of necessity have posited the non-self, which is identified by him with matter-force and regarded as eternal. Von Hartman wrote: "It is absolutely inconceivable that a conscious God should wait half an eternity content without a good that ought to be." Hegel said: "Without the world God is not God."

On the other hand the common Christian view is that the persons of the trinity in their communion with each other were from eternity self-sufficient and needed not create and that the eons, or time-worlds of Scripture ("eons of the eons," (Gal. 1:5) support the claim that many such worlds existed before ours, billions of years ago. The immensity and prodigious age of the universe, prove that at least trillions and quadrillions of years must be allowed for the earliest stellar systems. But, says Ward: "No theist can pretend that the world is co-ordinate with God; the divine transcendence is essential to the whole theistic position" (*Realm of Ends,* p. 243).

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[3] The Greek word here is **cosmos**, a world in space, not aeon, a world in time. Aeon, yielding the Latin **aevum**, denotes duration, as in Luke 1:70; Acts 3:21. Aeon represents the world in process of becoming and lends support to the view that in the billions of years since creation there may have been successive cycles or ages in the history of the universe.

6. *Creation Not Eternal*

Recent philosophy in endeavoring to mediate between Christian theism and Spinozistic pantheism is in a dilemma. We read: "The statement that time had a beginning is self-contradictory, since a beginning implies a time before that beginning" (J. A. Leighton, *Man and the Cosmos,* p. 495). This argument was met already by Augustine on the principle that the world was created "not in time, but with time" *(non in tempore, sed cum tempore)*. It was discussed fully by J. A. Dorner, who writes: "If time existed before the world, God must have existed in time. . . When the actual world came into existence, actual time came into existence" *(System of Christian Doctrine. II)*. Creation was calling into existence of that which previously was not. "Eternal creation" is a contradiction in terms, like a square circle. In regarding it as "eternal," the idea of creation is destroyed, said Strauss. Dr. W. R. Matthews wrestles with the problem through twenty pages and reaches the conclusion: "If we reject the theistic hypothesis and refuse to distinguish between God and the created order, we shall undoubtedly be unable to think of creation without involving ourselves in contradiction" *(Studies in Christian Philosophy,* p. 208). Advocates of eternal creation are open to the charge of J. McCabe, translator of Haeckel, that their view makes God merely "a principle in nature, and not distinct from it." To regard the world as an eternal creation or evolution of God is first emanationism and then pantheism and naturalism.[4]

7. The Barth-Brunner Eternity-Time Hypothesis

Barth and Brunner are correct with the possibility that they are incorrect in their eternity-time contention. There is a Yes and a No, a No and a Yes, a stronger No than Yes.

(1) Eternity a Category Different From Time

Eternity is not time infinitely prolonged; it is a different category. This is the consensus of opinion of most philosophers. "Like Royce, the monist, Schiller, the puralist, teaches that time in spite of its partial reality, is not all of reality; and that eternity is a transcendence of time" (Calkins, *Persistent Prob,* p. 445).

Brunner, therefore, is justified in writing: "It is not a question of the preservation of the cosmos, but of a pantheistic substitute, *a creatio continua,* for the creation of faith. This is admitted (by Schleiermacher) in the sense that 'our actual feeling of dependence thereon (viz. the creation doctrine) finds no more definite satisfaction than in the representation of an eternal creation.' But even this is only a veiled form for the rejection of the idea of creation. The admission of an act of creation is condemned as anthropomorphism, the question of the beginning of the world set aside as religiously of no significance and the Neo-platonic-identity philosophy brought to bear on the doctrine of a free creative act" (*op. cit.* p. 340). It is at bottom a question of the supernatural.[5]

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[4] "The existence of the material world is...not indispensable for God," (Ward, **op. cit., p.** 252). "To God the universe is **totum simul,** as to us any succession is one whole" (Royce, **The World,** etc.)...To God, a thousand years are as one day" (2 Peter 3:8). "That which connects events as succeeding each other in time must itself stand above the succession or stream of events" (J. Caird).

(2) Eternity-Time in the Dialectic Theology

If Barthians meant merely that eternity is not time indefinitely extended there would be no dispute. They mean something radically different, something around which the whole dialectic theology revolves. Eternity is the center from which all the lines of the dialectic, cosmic-eschatological system radiate. Eternity is everything, time nothing. Eternity, says Gogarten, "floats in a threatening and terrifying manner over time. It is in principle a dissolution of time. Everything in the sphere of earthly existence and life, all history and man measured by eternity are nought." *(Offenbarung und Zeit).* Barth uses similar language (*Rbr.* p. 18). The chasm between these two eons is too broad and deep to allow any bridging or connection by man. No highway of time leads to eternity. If eternity be the "totally other," no ordinary language, but only dialecticism can describe the situation. Eternity and time are related as the Yes and the No, thesis and antithesis, the infinite and the finite. There is a "death-line" between them.[6]

In all such ratiocination Barth leaves theology and goes over into metaphysics and transcendental epistemology. If man can know nothing of the infinite, if all human thought is a No, how can Barth be sure of anything as to eternity and time, not to speak of building up a system of theology on such a premise. Does not his dictum *finitum non capax infiniti*, "hoist him on his own petard"? If nothing in man's thinking has eternal validity, does not Barth abandon a safe theory of knowledge and hazard a radical "Trotzdem" (defiance)——a new transcendentalism?

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[5] Brunner continues: "Schleiermacher indeed claims to reconcile naturalism and supernaturalism by a new, higher conception of miracle. But this comes to nothing more than the inconceivability of the natural and spiritual spontaneity, that is of the miraculous and natural. Miracle in the Biblical-Christian sense does not mean such freedom of nature and man, but, a proof of the divine freedom above these miraculous natural ordinances. Christ, whom Schleiermacher calls the true miracle, is, however, no miracle in the Biblical sense, but according to science, only the highest form of God-consciousness present in every man" (p. 340).

[6] It is true that Christ distinguishes sharply between this eon and the next, but in no such way as Barth suggests. Christ teaches that man is held strictly accountable for the deeds done in this eon.

Barth and Brunner score reason, rationalism and idealism without stint, but here Barth's "reason" evaluates time and eternity, that is reason is reinstated and made the judge of the eternal-time relation.[7] The assumption or certainty of the qualitative difference between time and eternity does not imply a contradiction or antithesis. If time be viewed as the cosmic form involving finitude, limitation, imperfection, it has a content that may not be ignored. If time as space, be regarded as a manifestation-form of the Infinite, it was ordained for a wise and useful purpose and not as a mere foot-ball of the Infinite. It may not be viewed as emptiness, for events (whatever their character) are ever occurring and enter the sum total of human history.

Neither Barth, Brunner, Gogarten, nor any other Barthian has anywhere, so far as we can discover, explained what they regard as the real, the metaphysical nature of time. The issue is evaded by the sole statement that time means finiteness, which no one disputes. What, if it should turn out that both time and eternity (as Spengler points out) are ultimates, which cannot be defined, are in short *transcendental* categories? In that case, and in fact in any case, Barth is estopped from affirming anything one way or another.[8]

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[7] "Der Vernunft wurde also jetzt wieder eine Stellung gegeben, die ihr eigentlich genommen werden sollte. Man muss, so behaupten wir, die Vernunft zur Richterin bestellen, wenn man die eindeutige Aussage über die Unmöglichkeit der Zeitimmanenz des Ewigen machen will. Man muss vor allem aber die Behauptung der gänzlichen, intellektuellen Unbetastbarkeit des Ueberzeitlichen aufgeben. Es kann ja die Unmöglichkeit einer Zeitimmanenz des Ewigen nur dann ausgesprochen werden, wenn man sowohl die Zeit wie Ewigkeit in die Situation theoretischer Betroffenheit versetzt hat. Nur dann kann der Satz des Widerspruchs Anwendung finden" (H. W. Schmidt, op. cit. p. 182).

The fact is that the dialectic theology (philosophy) has not distinguished sufficiently between concept and reality. Barth calls eternity the negation of time; he might almost as well call time the negation of eternity. He knows something about time, almost nothing about eternity and God, and so he has a *carte blanche* as to eternity. This becomes all the more evident when we note that time and things in time play a prominent part in the new transcendentalism. The world may be merely phenomenal, but it is here as something to be dealt with by weak and sinful men and though according to Barth, man is "unfree" he will be judged according to "his deeds."[9]

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[8] "Wenn die Zeit ebenso irrational ist wie die Ewigkeit und jeder logischen Durchdringung dauernd Widerstand leistet, dann könnte doch vielleicht dem "Unmöglich"! der Grund entzogen werden, mit dem Karl Barth den Gedanken einer zeitlichen Offenbarung vernichten will. Die Theologie der Krisis hat diese Erkenntniskritische Frage nicht gestellt. Sie hat nicht einmal nachgeprüft, welch grosser Unterschied zwischen der erkannten und der erlebten Zeit besteht, und sie hat die Frage unterlassen, ob nicht das logisch noch unbetroffne Zeitwesen im Erkennen schon seinerseits durch den 'Hinzutritt einer künstlichen Strukturkomplikation' (Lask) eine Entstellung erleidet. Wir behaupten, dass mit der Aufwerfung der Möglichkeits-frage Zeit und Ewigkeit der Region theoretischer Nachbildlichkeit und Strukturkünstlichkeit nahegerückt sind...Die dialektische Theologie hat bisher versäumt, durch eine Phaenominologie und Metaphysik der Zeit ihren Gedanken den notwendigem und begründeten Unterbau zu geben. Und doch spielt die Zeit in ihr die Rolle eines Zentralbegriffs: die Zeit ist der Generalnenner für alles natürlich und geschichtlich Seiende, die Welt-formel, die endliche Wirklichkeit umschliest. An diesem zentralen und wichtigen Punkt gab Barth bisher noch keine gewissenhafte theoretische Untersuchung; er ergibt sich einem unkritischen Dogmatismus, der ohne Prüfung mit einem Zeitbegriff operiert" (H. W. Schmidt, op, cit. p. 184–5).

[9] "Die Theologie der Krisis operiert mit der Zeit wie mit einer bekannten Grösse. So kommt es, dass das lebendige Gegenüber von Gott und Welt, Zeit und Ewigkeit, allmählich die Starheit logischer Gegensätzlichkeit annimmt. Der unendliche qualitative Unterschied von Zeit und Ewig-

B. BETWEEN THE TIMES

The phrase "Between the Times" *(Zwischen d. Zeiten)* occurs constantly in Barthian literature and is the title of their chief periodical. Its meaning must be clearly grasped. In Barthian theology the coming Kingdom of God, the resurrection of Christ and of the dead are not events of which one may affirm that they occur after the lapse of a certain number of years. Barth says in one place (Rbr. 483) that the length of time has as little to do with "Between the Times" as the time consumed by Phoebe in carrying Paul's Epistle to the Romans from Corinth to Rome has with the contents. Entrance into the Kingdom is the dissolution of time; hence this eternal truth, can be described only in figurative language. Our belief in the dissolution of time, our admission into the eternal Kingdom solely through grace, rests, not on human thought, not on proof of an undying soul-substance, but upon a divine promise, the revelation of a divine fact which cannot be described in terms of human evaluation. We live in faith "Between the Times," or rather between time and eternity, a period not chronologically determinable.

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keit wächst sich zu einem unbewegten metaphysichen Dualismus aus. Wir wissen sehr wohl dass Karl Barth sich gegen diese konsequenz sträubt. Trotzdem aber tritt wieder deutlich hervor, dass sich die Dialektik dem Gedanken eines lebendigen, persönlichen Verkehre Gottes mit dem Menschen feindlich zeigt" (Schmidt, op. cit. p. 186).

CHAPTER V

THE CHASM BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

A. Barth's Viewpoint

Speaking of God implies man, speaking of man implies God, says Barth. Man must be viewed as ever under the eye of God, *sub specie aeternitatis,* or rather *sub specie mortis.* We must view man, not as he views himself, but as God views him. How man became a sinner is of less practical interest than that he is now a sinner. Man is indeed a "fallen creature" (Rbr. pp. 12, 16), and is disowned ("verneint") by God, but God seeks the real man underneath the fallen man: Gott "verneint uns, *wie wir sind.*"

"Can there be anything more astounding than the majestic mystery of this impenetrable and unapproachable, this only free, mighty Being? Might we not all instinctively cry out, that this is not, cannot be God? The God against whom this cry would not arise, would not be God" (*Rbr.* p. 334). Hence the absolute absoluteness of God.

1. Man, Though Highly Endowed, Is A Sinner And Cannot Save Himself

Compared with God, man appears in various aspects. Made according to Scripture in "the image, after the likeness of God," he is a rational being of high order, possessing gifts of thought and personality shared by no other creature on earth. But he has limitations, physical, intellectual, spiritual. The religionist and theologian ask, What is the real state of man? Is he as bad and corrupt at heart as the Bible (Rom. 3) represents? Does he not love God and his fellow-men if he has a fair opportunity? Yes, says the man of the street, and the average modernist. No, says Barth. Man does not, cannot, of his own accord come to God. He is "unfree," the slave of sin. He is born with a corrupt nature and will die with a corrupt nature unless he is born anew through the Holy Spirit.

Unless we are born anew, justified by grace, our love to God is nothing more than a Zinzendorfian, Romantic, Hindu, theosophic self-righteousness, filthy rags in God's sight. All alike, Jew and Gentile, are children of wrath. Rom. 5:12–4. Sin is therefore the fundamental characteristic of man, as we know him, the 'empirical man' as Kant would say. *A man without sin we could not know.*

As said Cardinal Newman, "God has two kinds of children, the *once-born* and the *twice-born.*" Only the latter are the true children of God. According to Barth nine-tenths of what is proclaimed about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is "rotten." The gulf between God and man, between man and man is too great to admit of any such love and brotherhood. "The human correlate to the divine aliveness is neither virtue, nor inspiration, nor love, but the fear of the Lord, mortal fear, the last, absolute, perfect fear. I have in mind what is expressed by Michael-Angelo's figure of the prophets: 'Our God is a consuming fire' " (*WGuT*. p. 86).

God is absolute: man in sin has no standing in his sight. Even the figure of the potter and the clay is inadequate. "From the potter to the clay, from the workman to the work, there is no bridge, no continuity." Man is almost zero. "Man stands related to God, as the given to the not-given, as being to not-being. Every evidence of God's right, freedom, creative activity and redemption, simply pushes the problem further back. . . Man is a vessel of wrath, incapable either of thinking of, or obeying God," says Barth.[1]

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[1] "Der Mensch steht Gott gegenüber als das gegebene dem Nicht-Gegebene, als das Sein dem Nicht-Sein," (Rbr. p. 342). In so far as man re-

2. A Supralapsarian Foreordination

Barth continues: "Man is a sinner, but just as men are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, so men are foreordained to sin before the foundation of the world. The doctrine of original sin as formulated in the Western Church would by no means commend itself to Paul as 'a satisfactory hypothesis' (Lietzmann), but as one of the many historical-psychological perversions of his meaning. As the righteousness revealed to the world in Christ, so also the sin entering the world in Adam, is the *un-temporal* and *transcendental* disposition of mankind...Sin is in the world, not as an event or condition, nor as the sum of events and conditions, nor yet as an historical-psychological happening, but as an inner and everywhere predetermined destiny *(vorausgesetzte Bestimmtheit)* of human events and conditions...Sin is not a *fall,* or a series of *falls,* in the life of man, but the *fall* which takes place with his life as man. Sin is present already before it manifests itself in the consciousness or subconsciousness of this or that person." (*Rbr. pp.* 149, 151.)[2]

The eternal word cannot be uttered by man, for it never enters time. All attempts to bridge the death-line between time and eternity must fail, even in revelation, which is a revelation that does not reveal. Astounding

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ceives God's revelation, "kann er nichts anderes sein als das 'Gefäss des Zornes,' unfähig Gott auch nur denken, ihn zu gehorchen, etwas anderes zu erfahren, als dass er an Gott sterben muss" (ibid, p. 343).

[2] "Die Sünde (des ersten Menschen) ist der überzeitliche Fall aller Menschen aus ihrer Einheit mit Gott durch ein 'Gefangennehmen der Wahrheit in Ehrfurchtlosigkeit und Unbotmässigkeit' (1:18), das seine Erklärung findet (und nicht findet) in der göttlichen Prädestination des Menschen **zur Verwerfung,** die seiner ewigen Erwählung in Christus folget wie der Schatten dem Licht, der Fall der also in dem Vorfall des Fehltrittes Adams wohl seine erste Wirkung, aber night seine Ursache hat. Und die altreformierte These lässt sich durchaus hören und vertreten, dass auch die Prädestination zur Verwerfung als 'supralapsarisch' dem historischen Sündenfall vorausgehend, zu begreifen ist" (150).

as it may seem to those not initiated into the mysteries of this queer obscurantism, there can be no revelation of God, for man is in time, God in eternity.

B. IS THE CHASM AS GREAT AS REPRESENTED BY BARTH?

Is the chasm, the distance between God and man really as great as represented by Barth? Is "the majestic mystery" and holiness of God of such a character that there can be no bridge "from the workman to the work"? Is God so transcendently distant from man? Is a man a vessel of wrath "incapable of thinking of God"? Is it true that "God stands over against the man and everything human in an endless qualitative difference" (*Rbr.* p. 371)?

1. Man's Personality

That man is a rational, self-conscious, self-determining agent (whom God approaches as such) is assumed here as not needing proof. "In the image of God made he him" (Gen. 1:27). "The image" (1) is something which evidently forms the ground and basis of his preeminence above animals; (1) it is something which is transmitted to his descendants (5:1, 3; 9:6) and belongs therefore to man in general, and not to man in a state of innocence; (3) it relates from the nature of the case, to man's immaterial nature. It can be nothing but the gift of *self-conscious reason,* which is possessed by man, but by no other animal" (S. Driver, *Genesis,* p. 53). God is the absolute personality. Man is a true, though, finite personality.

Man, though separated from God by a wide interval, possesses originative powers, apprehension of great principles, intellectual and moral ideals, the faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong and of knowing God and communing with him. "Personality belongs essentially to another order [than the physical], to the realm of the eternal. Its existence and value are non-spatial and non-temporal. Quality, not quantity, is the 'stuff,' and quality as Streeter has shown is spiritual...Minds, souls, persons and their relations—these are the primary and ultimate realities" (J. W. Buckham, *Jour. Religion,* Oct. 1929, pp. 517, 519).

2. Conscience

Even as sinful, man still has a conscience and can distinguish between right and wrong; conscience implies a knowledge of self in relation to a moral standard. Conscience pronounces judgment. It says: Thou shalt. Thou shalt not. Since conscience pronounces judgment that right is supremely obligatory it has been called God's voice. It is probable that the *daemon* of Socrates was the equivalent of our conscience. Although Schenkel, the theologian, was an Hegelian, he has some observations on conscience that are fundamental and directly subversive of Barth's whole contention regarding the aloofness of God: "Only in conscience is man conscious of himself as distinct from God, yet normally as bound to be determined wholly by God. When we subject ourselves wholly to God, conscience gives peace. When we surrender to the world the allegiance due only to God, conscience brings remorse. In this latter we become aware that while God is in us, we are no longer in God" *(Christliche Dogmatik)*. Schleiermacher held that religion is feeling: Schenkel, that it is conscience, a sense of dependence on God.

It would be interesting to know how Barth construes Gen. 4:13; Job 27:6; Acts 24:16, and other passages speaking of conscience as a monitor, even in the unregenerate state.[3]

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[3] According to Rom. 2:14–15 the heathen have the light of conscience: "For when gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the

3. Repentance

Repentance means a turning about from a perverted, to the right way. True repentance or conversion consists in two things: the dying of the old man and the quickening of the new man (Heid. Catechism, 88).

On this Thelemann says: "There is no fixed form of conversion, but it takes place in accordance with the will and guidance of God, either gradually, as in the case of the patriarch Jacob, or instantaneously, as in the case of Saul" (*Heidelberg Catechism,* p. 320). Scripture abounds in calls to repentance, implying that men have capacity to repent: Joel 1:8; Zech. 1:3; Acts 3:19, etc. According to the Heidelberg Catechism "It is heartfelt sorrow for sin; causing us to hate and turn from it always more and more" (89). This means that man is not a clod or stone, an inanimate object, but as rational, held accountable for his acts—something that Barth's one-sided view of man ("Otherwise than in the *negation of the creature,* the attitude of the Creator and the eternal meaning of the creature has never been recognized" (*Rbr.* p. 64), forbids.

In repentance and conversion man acts. "Being the conscious turning of the entire man, repentance is a moral change. Under the action of will a person gives himself a direction in confidence toward Jesus Christ....The self-

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law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves; in that they show the word of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or excusing them." "The 'conscience' of Paul is a natural faculty which belongs to all men alike (Rom. 2:15) and pronounces upon the character of actions, both their own (2 Cor. 1:12) and those of others (2 Cor. 4:2)." (Sanday, **Romans**, p. 61)...In the section, "How Scripture is mediated to man Barth allows that we are "subjectively determined by the concrete freedom of the conscience," there can be "authority only in the sphere of freedom, only where there is a conscience," that is conscience in the comprehensive older sense of **conscientia**, understood as active consciousness" (**Dog.** I, pp. 388, 389, 393). This would mean that conscience, as implying freedom, is a medium of approaching God. Thus Barth is in contradiction with himself.

determined turning of the personality...A conscious turning to God in Christ" (E. V. Gerhart, *Instit. Chris. Relig.*, II, pp. 691–2).

4. Salvability

Man even in sin is still man and salvable (as indeed Barth says) and therefore the terrible gulf between God and man can be bridged. Barth is correct in holding that God seeks the real man underneath the fallen man.[4]

5. God's Works An Absolute Riddle

As a consequence of his false conception of time and eternity some astounding assertions occur throughout Barth's writings. Scripture speaks of God as Creator, man as created in time. The world, however, as we see it and as it really is, is not God's work, but a world under the dominion of sin. Creatureness for Barth belongs to the world of sin. "Man's creatureness is his fetter. His sin is his guilt. His death is his fate" (*Rbr.* p. 13). Creatureness, sin and death go together. Scripture, however, says that God saw everything that he had made, and behold it "was very good" (Gen. 1:31). The creation is evaporated, nature and history are not what has heretofore been supposed either by theologian or scientist. Both the world as created and the world as redeemed are sought in a timeless, transcendent reality. Creation becomes a fall and a curse according to dialectic judgment. We are told in so many words: "They, [the Reformed fathers] did not too noisily and emphatically commend as God's earth this valley of the shadow in which we walk, for they knew that the world as the creation of God—like the true humanity of Christ—is hidden from us and is evident only to the eye of spirit" (*WGuT*. p. 206, Trans., p. 261).

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[4] "We recall Pascal's expression that we would not seek God unless we had already found him. If we did not ask we should not be the great question, if God had not already answered us." (Dog. I, p. 76). Barth then refers to the Reformed Catechisms of the 16th century which usually start with man, as the Heidelberg.

"What are God's 'works' in their absolute mysteriousness *(absoluten Räthselhaftigkeit)* other than wholly questions to which there are no direct answers, to which God alone gives the answer? Simply this, that we can know nothing of God, that we are not God" (*Rbr*. p. 22).[5]

6. *Man's Work Nil*

The idea of the Yes and the No as constantly emerging suppresses and practically displaces man's personal agency and activity. Everywhere we discover what may not be so meant, but what is really a rationalistic, neo-Kantian re-shaping of doctrine. The over-emphasis of the qualitative difference between God and man in Barth's dialectics forbids a real communion of God and man. Faith is "un-faith" and is neither "religious," nor "unreligious."[6] The God of Barth is virtually the Absolute of philosophy, without love or pity, rather than the Jehovah of the Old Testament and certainly not the God of the New Testament, who so loved the world that he sent his Son to redeem it.

It is a singular fact that the love of God occupies a subordinate place in the dialectic system, which led Althaus to write: Barth's theology lacks a satisfactory development of the love of God. The personal relation of will to will is displaced by the dialectic relation of the temporal to the eternal.

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[5] Die Beugung unter das göttliche Nein und die Erwartung des göttlichen Ja ist wahrlich nicht ein letzter frechster titanischer Schlag des nach der Immanenz und Transzendenz Gottes lüsternen Menschen" (**Rbr.** p. 80).

[6] "Der Glaube ist weder religiös noch unreligiös, weder heilig noch profan und er is immer auch beides... Der Glaube, sofern er in irgend einem Sinn mehr als Hohlraum sein will, ist Unglaube" (**Rbr.** p. 104).

7. No Real Communion Between God and Man

Incredible as it may seem, in Barth's dialectics the difference between time and eternity, between persons in time and eternity, is basic and virtually reduces the relation of God to man and man to God to a minimum. When Barth speaks of the chasm between God and man, time and eternity, he suggests a dualism which prevents a real communion and communication between the "I" and the "Thou." In itself this might seem to be a trivial psychological and metaphysical distinction, but the object is to lay the foundation for the Biblical doctrine of a creation in time, which considered in itself is the correct view, and not in eternity as held generally by scientists and by some theologians. The object is laudable, but in the Barthian system, time, things in time, persons in time, history (as ordinarily understood) all human endeavor and even Biblical history are under the blight of the finite, transitory, empirical, un-real world as over against the super-temporal and only real world. Barth's thesis requires him to deny that such stupendous events as the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ were "historic," as we shall see presently.[7]

8. Barth's Inadequate View Of Human Personality

If Barth allows that man is created in God's image (and is not an evolution from the lower orders) he must ascribe to him personality and the possibility of communion with God under the necessary conditions, and yet as seen above Barth declares that man is "unfree." We ascribe to God absolute, independent personality, to man true, but dependent personality.

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[7] "Die Dialektik entleert den inhaltsvollen Gedanken des lebendigen Verkehrs Gottes mit den Menschen. Diese ihre negative Tendenz muss besonders deshalb als unerträglich empfunden werden, weil sie auch positiv nicht leistet, was sie verspricht: die scharfe Fassung des qualitativen Unterschiedes von Gott und Welt. Wir behaupten, dass dieser Gedanke in dem biblischen Schöpfundsglauben reiner und teifer zum Ausdruck kommt als in dem dialektischen Realwiderspruch von Zeit und Ewigkeit" (Schmidt, **Zeit u. Ewigkeit**, p. 189).

A recent writer on Christian Ethics declares that next to holiness the greatest thing in the world is personality; and a well-known writer on philosophy writes: "It is the essence of a person to stand in relation with beings having an autonomy, in whom he recognizes rights, toward whom he acknowledges duties" (Howison, *The Limits of Evolution,* p. 52).

9. Futility of Human Endeavor

Barthians scathingly condemn all kinds of human striving. Belief in the presence of God in nature and history, mystical life in God, or endeavor to attain a higher life, are ridiculed by Barth and Brunner, as illusions, as fearful self-deception. Loud protestations have been uttered against this attitude of Barthians. That such is really Barth's contention we propose to prove by additional extracts from his writings.

What is the history of man up to the present? "It is the farce of the supposed superiority of the spirit and power of one man over another, the craftily concealed strife for existence, the rise and fall of old and new forms of human righteousness, which vie with each other in pomp and nothingness. The judgment of God is the end of history" (*Rbr.* p. 51). No religious sentiment, no self-sinking in God leads beyond self-interest. All religious experience, even singing and prayer, fall under this condemnation. The supposed human possibility of prayer is a feeling like any other and not very sympathetic. (*Z. d. Z.* 1923, p. 48.) Even the most devout and unctious prayers of prophets, apostles, Reformers are ever a peculiarity of human religion and share the fate of the doubtful in all religion. All worship of God, clasping of hands, feeling of God's nearness, speaking and writing on divine things, even books on *Romans* (his own included), rest under Barth's damnatory judgment (*Rbr.* 112, 300).

Barth has no patience with pietists and mystics, but directs his sharpest thrusts at "religious complacency and Christian self-assurance," which fortunately we find only among theologians (*Rbr.* p. 306).

Incredible as it may seem, even the great and inspiring German hymns sung in Lutheran and Reformed Churches do not escape Barth's shocking denunciations. A Swiss writer decleares that if the people understood the revolutionary character of the Barthian teaching they would be perplexed and shocked beyond expression.[8]

10. Capax Deitatis

Under one view the Barthian theology turns, not so much on God's *coming* to man as on man's capacity for *receiving* God, on man's dignity and worth. All reasoning starts with certain self-evident truths, unchallenged, at least provisionally. We approach every subject, notably a complex subject, with certain suppositions; this is all the more necessary in a problem in which physical, moral and spiritual elements are combined. In the case of Barthianism the issue is virtually settled before the controversy begins, settled by the presuppositions, epistemological, anthropological, and metaphysical of the respective combatants, as we have sought to show in Chapter II.

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[8] "Ich glaube, die meisten Glieder unserer Gemeinden die diese Sätze und Urteile, vielleicht ohne rechten Zusammenhang, hören oder lesen, werden darüber entsetzt, empört, zum mindesten verwirrt sein. Sie werden fragen: Ist denn Gott nicht auch der Herr über die Geschichte der Menschen, wie er Herr der Welt ist? Und dieser Glaube soll grundlos sein? Und die Religion, das Heiligste, was wir erlebt haben oder noch erleben, unser Gebet, unsere innerlichsten Empfindungen, wo wir Gott in uns gespürt und uns über uns selbst hinaufgetragen wuszten, all das soll rein menschliches Fühlen, ja menschliche Illusions sein? Und die lieben Lieder des evangelischen Gesangbuchs, die in ergreifender Form religiöse Erfahrungen frommer Dichter wiedergeben, fallen auch unter dieses Gericht?" (P. Burckhardt, **Was sagt uns die Theologie Karl Barth?** p. 42.)

The fundamental issue here is as to the extent to which man can know God, or on a high or low view of man. If man descended from the lower orders and is, according to science, an animal the question arises, When did he become a self-determining and responsible agent? Where do we find the first *genus homo?* Was it the Java, Heidelberg, Cro-Magnon or some other man who first was held responsible by God? Neither scientists, nor psychologists have answered the question.[9]

If Barth accepts the Biblical account of man's origin (as seems probable), his terrible arraignment, as seen in the previous section, rebounds upon himself. This is doubly true if one recalls the aspirations of men in all ages toward a higher power. "My soul is athirst for God." "We are restless till we rest in thee." These and other expression that might be adduced, indicate that man, created in God's image, was endowed with capacity to enter into communion with God.

Professor E. Brunner has much to say on reason and revelation, "the modern doctrine of immanence and Biblical transcendence," the inability of man to know God, "the contrast between idealism and the Biblical testimony," and "either a religion of self-redemption or a religion of a transcendent redemption" (*TC.* p. 15). In so far as he has in mind the new Humanism, a false and evolutionary as over against the Biblical doctrine of "original sin," the self-sufficiency of man and a denial of the supernatural he is on safe ground. When, however, he teaches that man can know nothing about God from nature or man's personality he is on indefensible ground. He writes: "We hold e.g., that God cannot be known by his active presence in the world. His presence in nature and history is not denied, but it is regarded as hidden, so that what God is, is not revealed" (*TC.* p. 28). The admission of God's "presence" is enough; it allows that he *is,* not necessarily *what* he is, but neither does revelation, as Barthians view it, reveal God; he is *hidden* even in Christ.

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[9] As to man's future existence, there are only three alternatives: (1) If man and animals are of the same origin, order and nature, and mortal, all cease to exist at death. (2) The animal as of the same order as man, is also immortal. In that case Sir Oliver Lodge is correct in holding that in the spirit world we shall have cats, dogs, and apes (especially apes, man being in their image) as companions. (3) Man as created in the image of God and having an abiding selfhood has an undyingness of nature, but secures true immortality only through Christ Jesus, whereas the animal, having only the life, or world principle or element, and serving any useful purpose for man here, but not hereafter, does not exist in the spirit world.

In fact, on the evolutionistic hypothesis (which logically issues in determinism and behaviorism) man is not a person and has no personal existence hereafter (being at death reabsorbed into the abyss whence he came). On this view Barth's man is low in intelligence and cannot rise to a conception of deity—has no **capax deitatis.** If, however, man was from the first man, with personal endowment and responsibility (whether he originated one million or fifty million years ago matters not) it is antecedently probable that he can attain, not indeed an exhaustive, knowledge of God, but a knowledge sufficient to hold him responsible (**Rom.** 1:18–19).

CHAPTER VI

THE UNKNOWN GOD

I

Barth's Basic Position

That Karl Barth's theology is paradoxical from first to last is seen in his fundamental thesis that God is unknown and yet the center of theology. God is not known and cannot be known to the native mind. "Man as man cannot know God. In vain is all his wishing, striving, seeking, reflection, zeal. The decisive point is missed, must be missed," (*Rbr.* p. 399).

Much depends upon one's understanding of Barth's objectivism. The absolutely objective, the transcendental (Kant) cannot be reached by man. It can be reached, or cognized, if cognized at all, only in *actus* and such *actus* Barth finds in Scripture and pre-eminently in Christ and the Holy Spirit. Man is baffled; his powers are limited; he knows little about himself and next to nothing about the vast cosmos. Even in his revelation of Himself God is ontologically unknown and unknownable, and yet in his revelation he authenticates himself as the One, the only one, the ineffable One, who creates the physical universe and institutes the time and space relations.

A. FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

Barth distinguishes sharply between faith and knowledge. The key-word in Christianity is *faith;* in science, *knowledge.* The former is divine and eternal, the latter human and temporal. If theology were to regard knowledge as its major premise it would abandon its own major premise and be judged and condemned at the bar of science. If, says Barth, you try to prove the existence and cognizability of God by human logic, you end in agnosticism. I propose to save Christianity from Agnosticism by the acceptance of faith as God-given, eternal, transcendental.

On Romans 1:19, 20, Barth says: "We know that God is he whom we do not know and that this not-knowing is the origin of our knowing...What do we know of the acts and works of God? Here is the greatest misconception... The Epistle to the Romans is a revelation of the unknown God; God chooses to come to man, not man to God. Even after the revelation man cannot know God, for he is ever the unknown God. In manifesting himself to man he is farther away than before" (*Rbr.* p. 353). The more we know of God, the more is yet to be known. "The revelation in Jesus, just because it is the revelation of the righteousness of God is at the same time the strongest conceivable veiling and unknowableness of God. In Jesus, God really becomes a mystery, makes Himself known as the unknown, speaks as the eternally Silent One....Faith in Jesus is a radical defiance (radikales Trotzdem). It is the adventure of all adventures" (*Rbr.* p. 73.)

B. Knowledge of God an Iridescent Dream

In a later work, the Dogmatik, Barth recedes somewhat from the strong language of the Römerbrief. "We have a knowledge of God in so far as we are an Ego, a self, an experience of him at the bottom of personality. All explanations are reducible to the *Cogito, ergo sum,* of Descartes, or rather *Cogitor, ergo sum*....But the difficulty of knowing God is only one side of the adventure of the Christian sermon. We may not undervalue its significance, even though we may not agree altogether with Heim that it is 'the life question of religion'...The way of approach to the cognizability of God is so obscure and known to so few, that whoever speaks of God affirms something, that as viewed by the world generally, is an iridescent dream...There is indeed a theological naivite, which quite honestly accepts in a very realistic way all such affirmations. But aside from such naivite, one is confronted by infidelity (in its most poisonous form, a pious infidelity) and by a most obstinate attack by men of the world" (*Dogmatik,* pp. 51, 54, 55, 57).

Barth's contention is summed up in the dictum: *Finitum non capax infiniti,* the finite has no capacity for the Infinite.

II

Review of Barth's Doctrine of the Unknown God

We now turn to an examination of Barth's doctrine of the "Unknown God." Can God be known? No, Yes. Yes, No, says Barth. Such paradoxes, like others, settle nothing, but imply an unexplained remainder. Whether there be a God at all and whether he is knowable is today as never before the burning question of epistemology, metaphysics and theology. If Barth has found the key to the problem he has earned the lasting gratitude of thinkers. If, on the contrary, he has led his followers into a "blind alley," he has injured the cause in which he is interested.

Since Barth revels in paradoxes, anti-climaxes, bold metaphors, involved sentences and a style more rhetorical than analytical it is not always easy to discover his meaning. Such is to a marked degree the situation in his use of the pivotal word "revelation" *(Offenbarung).* He discards the old classification of revelation in nature, in man, and in Scripture. Furthermore he rejects contemptuously the psychological and experimental theory of Schleiermacher and the rationalistic *apriorism* of "orthodox" theology; that is, the alleged natural consciousness of a knowledge of God, and the reasoned, discursive method of knowing God. He likewise rejects the pragmatism and humanism of today. Such attempts to prove the existence and revelation of God move in the sphere of finite, fallible man and can never penetrate the realm of things unseen and eternal.

According to Barth revelation takes three forms: the original revelation, Scripture and Christ. The Prophets of the Old Testament received a primal revelation, which as self-authenticating under the guidance of the Spirit, is the word of God. But the real, the absolute and final revelation is in the Logos, the Word of God. A fundamental thought of Barth, found on scores of pages, is that man has no disposition to come to God and so cannot know him. God must come to man through Christ. But even as revealed in Christ, God is still the "unknown God." "Also in his revelation, precisely in his revelation, God is a concealed God...Not on account of the relativity of human knowledge, is God concealed from us, but on account of the *absoluteness,* in which he makes himself known (*Dog.* I. p. 216).

But are we not able to know God through faith? Yes, No, answers Barth. Faith is the gift of God given in eternity through the Spirit, but on the human side it is "Hohlraum," a vacuum, Hybris, insolence. Revelation and faith, the *sola fide* of Luther and the *Soli Deo Gloria* of Calvin are inseparable correlatives, but no value attaches to the subjective side of faith; and so faith as "a vacuum" yields no knowledge of God. This will become clearer as we proceed.

A. THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE

Barth says that the Word of God is the norm and standard of truth. Let us turn to it.

1. The Old Testament

Job asks: "Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" (11:6.) This verse is typical of the Bible representation generally. We can know God as we know anything else, only imperfectly. In Ex. 33, in the scene in which God appears to Moses we read; "Thou canst not see my face" (v. 20) but "thou shalt see my back." That is, in a veiled form. Calvin commenting on Ex. 34:6, writes: "Where we may observe, first, the assertion of the eternity and self-existence of Jehovah...and secondly, the celebration of his attributes, giving us a description, not of what he is himself, but what he is to us, that our knowledge of Him may consist rather in lively perception than in vain and airy Speculation."

Not a few Old Testament passages imply the teachings of Hosea 13:4, "Thou shalt know no other God but me," an echo of Ex. 20:3.

A signal proof that God reveals himself in nature is seen in Ps. 19: "The heavens declare the glory of God, etc." The Psalm consists of two parts, the first denoting God's revelation in nature, the second in his law. Tholuck writes: "If all the preachers on the earth were silent and no human mouth told any more of God, there in the heavens his great glory and majesty are told and declared without cessation."[1]

2. The New Testament

The New Testament writers are more explicit. According to Paul, man through reason, may have sufficient knowledge of God to render him "inexcusable." The classic passage is Rom. 1:18–23, every word of which is significant. Barth, however, practically ignores it, saying: "We know that God is the one whom we do not know and this not-knowing is the problem and the origin of our knowing. . . What are God's works in their absolute riddleness *(absolution Räthselhaftigkeit)* other than questions without an answer" (*Rbr.* p. 22).

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[1] In the Old Testament, the heart, as the governing disposition, is an organ of knowledge: "The women that were wise-hearted," Ex. 35:25. "O taste and see that Jehovah is good, Ps. 34:8. Especially Jer. 24:7. "I will give them a heart to know me."

That this practical agnosticism dominates Barth's thinking and in fact renders him a victim of the Kantian unknowableness of the Thing-in-Itself is clear from such affirmations as the following: "*Romans* is a revelation of the unknown God; God comes to man, not man to God. *Even after the revelation man cannot know God,* for he is always the unknown God. In manifesting himself to us he is farther away than ever before (*Rbr.* p. 53).

In contrast with this, we have the following: "The pagan possesses a knowledge of God as invisible, 'the invisible things of Him'; as eternal, and omnipotent, 'everlasting power and divinity'; as holy in revealing wrath (orge) against sin; as one God, there being one almighty, supreme and eternal being; as benevolent, Acts 17:25; 14:16; Rom. 2:4. . . The unity, invisibility, omnipotence, eternity, retributive justice of the divine being are represented by Paul as knowable by man as man, and actual ly known by him in greater or less degree" (Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology,* I. p. 197).

It is worthy of note that Paul, Rom. 1:20, employs the word *noumena,* "things perceived," later appropriated by Kant to denote the things back of phenomena. The mysteries are invisible to sense, visible to inner reflection. The Kantian *noumena,* are things eternal, and physically invisible, but "perceived" as spiritually and ontologically real. Paul if writing today, would say that mental intuitions are at the basis of thought and accepted as valid before argumentation can begin. Here, however, the argument is *a posteriori,* "through the things that are made." Man can "hinder the truth in unrighteousness," v. 18, and can know enough to be "without excuse," v. 20. "Knowing God, they glorified him not as God, etc." Paul's language is uncommonly strong and direct.

The practical question arises: if men in ancient times with their limited range of knowledge were "without excuse," what must be said of this enlightened age with its limitless field of knowledge of the "works" of God? The terms employed by Paul for seeing, manifestation, knowing denote an internal rather than an external seeing and knowing. Calvin goes to the extreme of saying that the human mind is naturally endowed with the knowledge of God *(Institutes,* I. III). The knowledge of God is manifest *(phaneron).* Barth is right in holding that the "manifestation" *(phanerosis)* is from God, but is wrong in holding that man cannot cognize it. The knowledge of God thus acquired, though partial, is true knowledge.

In erecting their altar to the "Unknown God," Barth and his school forget that they do not advance beyond the Greeks and that Paul said; "What ye worship in ignorance I set forth unto you." That is, Paul made this God known.

B. God and Man in Reciprocal Relation

1. The Fundamental Barthian Paradox

The reader must again be reminded that Barth constantly reiterates that his method is dialectical, proceeding by affirmation and denial, the Yes and the No, with no safe, ascertainable midway resting-place. Astounding as it may seem, Barth boldly affirms that his affirmations and denials are meant to be, not God's absolute truth, but at most human and fallible concepts thereof. He sees paradoxes everywhere. As the earth is kept in its orbit by contrary forces, the centripetal and the centrifugal, so the truths of theology lie somewhere between the Yes and the No, but man can never discover the *via media.* Even God in revelation in Christ is not revealed but remains *Deus Absconditus.* In short God is the supreme paradox.

Barth is convinced that his views are based on Scripture, but as Scripture is the work of fallible man as he alleges (as will be seen presently) it would appear that he is arguing in a circle. However that may be, Barth speaks of the generally accepted metaphysical and ethical attributes of God, sovereignty, majesty, holiness, etc. It was said of Herbert Spencer that he knew a great deal about the "Unknowable"; so of Barth, one wonders how he came to know so much of the "Unknown God."

2. The Christian Doctrine of God

Without inquiring here whether Barth's representation of God is true or false, partly true or partly false, it seems proper to state a few points of the commonly accepted Church doctrines. That God is absolute Spirit (not a Spirit, as incorrectly rendered in the American Revision, John 4:24) is assumed at the outset. Even the best latest philosophy grants this. This world is finite and ever changing, as Barth truly says; the finite, as it began once, will end sooner or later. Underneath all the phenomena, there must be a power, an ultimate reality (not mere force, for that has not mind) which or who transcends the ever-changing cosmos, our world, all worlds. Herbert Spencer, reasoning from our own nature as personal, held that the ultimate reality, though unknowable, cannot be less than personal, indeed super-personal (whatever that may be). This Being is both transcendent to and immanent in the cosmos. God in realizing the purpose of creation maintains a providential care over the world, culminating in the incarnation of the Logos. This doctrine of the transcendence and immanence of God is at the bottom of many a Christian fact not otherwise understood. Regeneration, faith, justification, the mystical union with Christ are *transcendental* in the sense that they are beyond the power of human analysis.

The scientist has no advantage over the theologian. Starting with a dozen metaphysical postulates, he allows that ultimate entities are in a field which he cannot enter. How matter acts on matter, mind on mind, what substance, force, life, electrons are, he cannot explain. Laplace said that Newton had indeed discovered the law of gravitation, but had not explained *what* gravitation *is* or what ultimately prevents the planets from falling into each other in a *universal smash-up.* Science has not answered Laplace's question. Science starts with the assumption of a universal ether, "a subtle imponderable medium," about which nothing is known. (The view of Sir Oliver Lodge, that it is the most real of all entities, is not generally accepted.) We have no quarrel with science in its assumption of an ether, except to remark that it is an ASSUMPTION and not a proved datum, and so does not differ in principle from the theologian's assumption of a God. Nay more: since ether, even in Lodge's scheme, is not endowad with mind, it is a less probable and rational assumption than that of the theologian.

3. Mysteries in Science

As the case stands, the scientist in the face of recent marvellous discoveries in chemistry, physics and astronomy, has not explained the ultimate constitution of things, or even whether there be matter at all, whether at bottom it be not mere force or energy. There are as many mysteries in science as in Christianity.

The point to be remembered is that just as science accepts as facts, things the ultimate constitution of which transcends human conception or explanation, so in the higher realm of religion and Christianity, there are facts and truths that transcend reason. Things, though above reason, may not be contrary to reason. What is contrary to reason is impossible. It is contrary to reason that a thing should at the same time be and not be. What is above our finite, limited, fallible reason is not necessarily impossible. Even though the ether medium be regarded as a "myth," it is not necessarily an irrational conception.[2]

4. Can Man Without Scripture Revelation Know God?

Barth writes: "Man as man cannot know God. In vain is all his wishing, striving, seeking, reflection, zeal" (*WGuT*. p. 399). We understand Barth to mean that man in his native state cannot know God, for he later argues that only in Scripture and pre-eminently in Christ is God made known but only in part. We therefore in this section limit ourselves to the former side of the subject.

In every religion the initial and all-determining question relates to God. A high view of God means a high religion; a low view, a low religion. No progress is possible here unless an understanding be reached. "Where atheism, pantheism, naturalism have more than ever become a terrible power we have no choice but to begin with the doctrine of God" (Van Oosterzee, *Ch. Dogmatics,* I, p. 231).

The problem is: If God be the infinite and absolute personality and man a finite and limited personality, how can such a finite being, circumscribed in all his faculties, have a true conception of God? Since no finite quantity or quality however far extended equals the infinite, how can finite man know God as defined in the Ecumenical

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[2] And yet a scientist writes: "Many of the concepts of science like the tubes of force and the ether, are so grossly inconsistent and inconceivable that they must be abandaned if science desires to retain even a vestige of self-respect" (R. Reuterdahl, Scientific Theism, etc., p. 34).

Creeds? The terms are incommensurable. But if God cannot be known how can we affirm anything as to his character and his relation to man and man's to him? The answers range from utter scepticism to implicit faith, from the assertion of the absolute impossibility of knowledge to the claim of at least adequate, if not perfect knowledge.

5. Contradictory Theories Concerning God

The absolute unknowableness of God has been proclaimed in early and later times. Scotus Erigena held that God did not know himself and so could not be known by man. On the other hand the Arians, in denying the Trinity, argued that God could be so adequately known as to warrant the conclusion that he must exist as a single person. A wide-spread view is that even with the light of Scripture and the facts of science and philosophy, we can at most imagine, but never know what God is.

Later German philosophers, as Schelling, saw in God a dark primary substance, not fathomed by himself and indeed unfathomable. God might, however, be able to know himself without being cognizable by us.

In the pantheistic system as developed by Spinoza and others, man can through reason know God, because he is in essence one with God. Spinoza affirmed that he had as clear an idea of God as of a triangle. The absolute idealism of Hegel led to a like conclusion, as does Sir Oliver Lodge's philosophy of a Universal or Cosmic Spirit, though not in the Christian sense. Man can know God because he is part of the Universal Spirit (this being the metaphysical basis of Lodge's spiritism).

On the other hand, ancient and modern mystics hold that, not through reason and the intellect, but through feeling, devotion and contemplation man can know God. Gerson and Tauler taught that the soul by losing itself in

God "became so divine, that if it rightly experienced itself, it would regard itself as equal to God." (Van Oosterzee, I, p. 235). In extreme mysticism man is ethically one with God, just as in extreme pantheism, man is ontologically one with God. The excesses of mysticism, on the one hand, and the real or alleged mystical background of Schleiermacher's theology, on the other, have set Barth and Emil Brunner like flint against all Schleiermacherism, as we shall see.

According to Kant, it is impossible for the intellect, the pure reason, to know God. Of the four antinomies, the thesis of the third is that reason can prove that there is a God, the antithesis, that there is no God. It is to be feared that Barth has fallen a prey to Kant's phenomenalism. Staehelin writes: "Limitation of knowledge to phenomena involves the elimination from theology of all claims to know the objects of the Christian faith as they are in themselves" *(Kant, Lotze and Ritschl)*. Edward Caird says of his brother John: "The conviction that God can be known and is known, and that in the deepest sense, all our knowledge is knowledge of him, was the corner-stone of his theology."

Barth's view that God is unknown is equivalent to Kant's assumption that the mind cannot know anything outside itself, and cuts the ground from beneath his feet in an attempt to reach certitude and objectivity. How can Barth establish the authenticity and credibility of Scripture, to say nothing of the resurrection of Christ, if he denies to man the possibility of reaching reality?

6. *Agnosticism*

According to the *Century Dictionary* Agnosticism is "the doctrine that the ultimate cause and the essential nature of things are unknowable, or at least unknown... It is sometimes used too as implying belief that the being of God is not merely now unknown, but must always remain unknowable."

Next to Kant Sir William Hamilton and Herbert Spencer taught an agnosticism appealing strongly to some persons. It will lead to a better understanding of Barth if we pause a moment to analyze the "Relativity of Knowledge" and the "Unknowableness of God," as championed by these writers.

(1) *Hamilton's Relativity of Knowledge*

Hamilton held that on account of the limitations of our facultities knowledge at best is not absolute, but relative, not objectively valid, but only as related to our sense. It is true that we know only what is related to nature. But this means that we know only what we know, *leaving* the content of our knowledge undetermined. In other words the laws of our knowing are not merely relative, but correspond to the nature of things.

Hamilton taught that the existence of the self, the world and God is an immediate affirmation of our consciousness. This was apparently an advance on Kant's sceptical position, but it was not so in fact, for he held that this fundamental postulate cannot be known or proved by man. The words descriptive of God, such as infinite and absolute, he alleged to be purely negative concepts or at most abstractions. He writes: "The absolute and the infinite can only be conceived as a negation of the thinkable; in other words, of the absolute and infinite we have no conception at all." This means: only the infinite can know the infinite, man is not infinite, therefore he cannot know the infinite. The sophism is obvious. The infinite, though without limits, may be known by man partly and adequately, but not exhaustively. The scientist knows much about the atom and the electron, but not all; so of many things in nature. Under the Hamiltonian view we could not know anything and would land in absolute scepticism. The term infinite is ambiguous. When we say that space is infinite we mean that it is unlimited (though recent science tends to the hypothesis that space is *theoretically* infinite, but *practically* finite). But even so, space has content, boundaries (without which it would not be space) and to that extent it is knowable.

Hamilton and agnostics generally (Barth is possibly to be included) confuse mathematical infinity of quantity with ethical infinity of quality. Things we know through their limits in space, persons through their qualities. In knowing God as Creator and redeemer we know him as possessing attributes in ideal and absolute perfection in contrast with human limitations.

(2) *Spencer's Unknowable*

Agnosticism as understood in America is usually associated with the name of Herbert Spencer. His philosophy as philosophy is dead, but many infidels, atheists and energetic monists accept his premises and conclusions. An untheistic evolutionist, he developed a philosophy of "The Unknowable," avowing in the preface of his *First Principles* his belief in "an absolute that transcends not only human knowledge but human conception." He admits that "religious ideas of one kind or another are almost, if not quite universal" and that "religion expresses some eternal fact."

He further holds that the atheistic, pantheistic and theistic views of the origin of the universe are "verbally intelligible," but "literally unthinkable." Nevertheless he allows that there is a "First Cause," who is infinite and independent. He advanced beyond Kant and Hamilton in allowing that the universe exhibits a Power beyond itself, though this Power is inscrutable. His system, developed, ends in atheism.

7. *Barth's Strong Language*

Barth's language in the Römerbrief on man's incapacity to know God is even stronger than in the other works. "We as theologians are men and as such cannot speak of God"... (*WGuT*. p. 158). "God is ever as compared with man on the Yonside, new, foreign, transcendent, never within man's reach...Otherwise than in the negation of the creature and the abiding meaning of the creature, the Creator has never been known...In the knowledge of the fundamental difference between God and the world lies the only possible presence of God in the world" (*Rbr*. pp. 98, 64, 86). Again, "Sin entering the world in Adam is the untemporal and transcendental disposition of mankind..., through a predetermined destiny...*supralapsarisch.*" "Man is a vessel of the wrath" of God.

8. *Barth's Sensus Communis*

As seen below in the section on "Barth's Transcendental Epistemology" a *sensus communis,* a child-like simplicity, a universal feeling of truth is the starting-point of knowledge even to the extent that "the knowledge of God is simple and comprehensive." We already know "in our heart of hearts what the Bible tells us." Let it not be supposed that by this 'common sense' Barth means what we ordinarily understand by that term, or by the term intuition, for in the Barthian scheme both terms, as of human origin, are anthropological, humanistic, subjectivistic and so of no value in matters spiritual. He means, not faith (for that is *Hohlraum,* emptiness), but an eternal, transcendental something, which, however mediated (a point nowhere fully explained) is the starting-point of knowledge. Kant assumed a transcendental background, unknowable to man; Barth agreeing that such transcendental cannot be reached by man, boldly affirms that God (whose existence reason cannot establish, but which "a universal feeling of truth" must accept) in a moment not originating in time or space, but "in a third dimension, so to speak," comes thus transcendently to man.

As seen above, the idea of a cosmic-eschatological dualism is developed by Barth with consummate skill in regard to eternity and time, God and man, heaven and earth. In the Barthian premise that things eternal and things temporal are incommensurable and that the chasm between God and man is humanly unbridgeable, it follows that God is unknowable. Barth is driven to this fatal position by the hypothesis that if man by nature possessed capacity for the infinite, it would imply a divine immanence leading under proper development to a form of pantheism, or at least false humanism and auto-soterism. We shall see later that Brunner finds so many objections to immanence, that one wonders whether at bottom there be any immanence or image of God in man left, whether all be not transcendent, whether God be not so *transcendently transcendent* that there remains no point of contact between God and man.

Barth does not stop with the rightful claim that God is God and not man, but writes: "God is the pure negation, the yonside of the thisside, *the negation of the negation";* "whoever speaks of God affirms something that is an iridescent dream."

Failing to distinguish sharply between a partial knowledge of God as revealed in nature and an absolute knowledge, Barth has fallen into the error of accepting the view of Aristotle, Leibnitz, Kant, Hamilton, Spencer and a contemporaneous brood of pop-in-jay writers on philosophy (not to mention scientists) and has no safe and solid basis for mediating between fundamentalists and modernists. If, even in the revelation in Christ (of whose "life and personality we know really nothing, *wirklich nichts,*" according to Bultmann, one of Barth's disciples), God is not revealed, as says Barth, how can he start with anything definite? Instead of reasoning from the known to the unknown, he reasons from the *unknown* to the still more *unknown.*

9. Barth, Brunner and E. V. Gerhart

Referring to the two theories of knowing God, the one "on the ground of divine immanence," the other "on the ground of divine transcendence," Professor Brunner writes in a foot-note: "When here and in the following lectures we distinguish between the *transcendent* God of the Bible and the God-idea of the *religion of immanence,* it is important to note that we are treating of an epistemological but not a cosmological transcendent" (*TC.* p. 28). But cosmological and epistemological immanence are interrelated. Whether or not man can be included in the cosmos, his endowment is from God. If created in God's image as Brunner holds, that much at least is immanent; and all the more so if that endowment be a self-determining personality. Brunner's contention is valid over against emanationism, naturalism, and pantheism, but not over against man's selfhood.[3]

10. Kohlbrüggianism and Barthianism

Whether or not there be any connection between Barthianism and Kohlbrüggianismus, the low state of man in the latter system is significant. A Kohlbrüggianismus writer has said that man is ignorant, blind and sinful. The Rev. Prof. W. A. Meier writes: "Wenn aber der Mensch in göttlichen und geistlichen Dingen so blind, unwissend und untüchtig ist, wo bleibt denn meines Kohlbrüggianers Gottes und Selbsterkenntnis, die doch durch göttliche Erleuchtung im Geist des Menschen bewirkt ist? ——Nein, Freund, wo Erkenntnis Gottes und seiner selbst ist, und wenn auch beschränkte, da kann von *gänzlicher* Blindheit und Unwissenheit nicht mehr die Rede sein" *(Kritik des Kohlbrüggianismus,* p. 69). Dr. Meier was for many years a professor in the Mission House College, of the Reformed Church in the U. S., Plymouth, Wis. Rev. W. C. Laube, Editor of the *Presbyterian Standard,* writes: "Barth freely acknowledges his debt to the late Dr. H. F. Kohlbrügge of Elberfeld. We are all indebted to him and most of us could learn from him. But there has been a movement which has gone beyond the master. Karl Barth's *pessimism about human nature,* his emphasis upon an angry God, rather than on the God of love, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, his utter despair of the historic Church, seem to us extreme positions which he shares with this particular wing of Reformed thought." *(Chris .World,* Mar. 1, 1930.) In the Preface to Dogmatik I, Barth refers to Kohlbrügge as one, *"den ich doppelt unterstreichen könnte."*

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[3] A former president of the Lancaster Theological Seminary in which the above-mentioned lectures were delivered, the Rev. Dr. E. V. Gerhart, knocks the underpinning out from under Brunner's whole contention: "Within the compass of the cosmos, man is the **most real revelation** of God, the normal qualities of humanity being the best exponents of the essential qualities of Deity; and for the reason that man is ethico-rational, a unity not merely of mechanical and organic forces, like the animal, but of spiritual properties, a unity in which subject and object are indissolubly one, in which ethical life is consciously self-determined, and rational life is freely self-known. By virtue of his **God-like** constitution, he is directly receptive of God's self-annunciation and responsive to God's righteous authority" (**Institutes of the Christian Religion,** I, p. 526). Such is the mature judgment of a scholar upwards of seventy years of age compared with that of a young man in his thirties.

CHAPTER VII

THE BIBLE AS THE FALLIBLE WORD OF MAN

The cosmic-eschatological dualism as set forth in the three preceding chapters finds its still more rigid application in the two mutually exclusive views of the Bible: (1) The Bible as the word of finite, fallible man; (2) The Bible as the word of an infinite, absolute God; or the Bible composed largely of inaccurate, unreliable history, and even legends and myths, and the Bible as in some sense an inspired revelation of God. We confine ourselves in this connection to the former aspect of the subject.

A. NO FORMAL TEXTUAL OR LITERARY-HISTORICAL CRITICISM

In the usual introduction to Scripture, the question of authorship, transmission of the text and the canonicity are viewed as of prime importance. In the *Dogmatik* Barth devotes the whole of Volume I *(Prolegomena)* to an elaborate discussion of the Word of God, or Scripture. In 1923 Barth had a controversy (running through four numbers of the *Christliche Welt*) with A. Harnack on textual and literary-historical criticism. The position then taken by Barth, but challenged by Harnack, that revelation, Scripture, and the sermon, as inspired by God, are fundamentally one and inseparable, is reaffirmed and defended in the *Dogmatik*.[1]

That revelation, miracle, Christianity do not hinge on the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture, is signally shown by the incarnation of Christ, which was a real, but a supernatural event, and accordingly not cognizable by the senses. "It is not an altogether deplorable fact (it could not be otherwise) that the birth narratives of Jesus (Matt. 1: 18–25; Luke 1:31–35) are veiled and give rise to uncritical, unpsychological hypotheses of myth and legend" (*Dog.* I, p. 247), for the event took place in the domain of spirit, where things must be spiritually discerned and are not historical as outward phenomena. They are, however, all the more real.

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[1] Nowhere in Dogmatik I, or elsewhere does Barth enter into a formal consideration of textual or literary-historical criticism of either the Old or New Testament. There are at most scattered statements occasionally. This looks like a strange omission, but Barth has his reasons.

1. *Barth's Introduction to the Word of God*

The foregoing resumé of Barth's views and the controversy with Harnack show that the Crisis, the dialectic theology, presents an inadequate theory of the Bible as a trustworthy document.[2] On every page we are told that the Bible is the Bible, the Word of God and a revelation, but only in rare cases is an attempt made to explain how we came to have such a Word of God. The Bible, Minerva-like, would appear to have dropped down from heaven, fully formed. When Barth publishes a book as a Prolegomenon to the Word of God, it is the most disappointing in all theological literature. We refer to his *"Christliche Dogmatik,"* Vol. I, 1927, with the sub-title *Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes,* Prolegomena zur Christlichen Dogmatik (The Doctrine of the Word of God, etc.) a book of 474 pages. We give below a rough outline of the contents.[3]

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[2] In the above mentioned Harnack-Barth controversy Harnack asks whether the religion of the Bible, specifically the revelation, is so uniform that one can in respect of faith and life speak of the Bible? If not, can we rely on subjective experience, or is criticism necessary? Barth replies that beyond the religion and revelation of the Bible, the theme of theology is the revelation of God in Christ. Historical evidence is of course valuable, but the inner content of the gospel is its own authentication. Harnack in the second question asks whether in addition to "inner illumination," we do not need historical and critical aid? Barth replies: "Inner illumination, experience, life, heart, etc., on the one hand and historical knowledge and critical reflection on the other are possibilities which may be helpful, indifferent, or harmful. The Bible can be understood neither through this, nor that psychic or spiritual process, but only in the power of the Holy Spirit imparted in faith." Barth having appealed to 2 Cor. 5:16, "We know Christ no longer according to the flesh," Harnack asks whether we no longer know the historical Christ. To which Barth does not immediately respond, but in his fourth and closing article remarks that an historically known or humanly conceived Christ may not after all be the Christ of the Spirit.

The book is an introduction to theology, rather than to the Bible. It does not take up the question of the origin and transmission of the books. These subjects are studiously ignored. But there is an object in this procedure as the reader will see by scrutinizing the Outline. Since the Bible is a human book like any other, according to Barth, and since the work of man is imperfect and since history does not, cannot, record, things as they are, but merely as they appear to be, the real Bible, the only Bible containing the unfathomable mysteries of God, is a transcendental revelation, invisible, hidden, unrecordable in human language or thought, but mediated in some way not clearly defined. One of the Barthians (Thurneysen) even ventures to say that critics who have torn the Old Testament to tatters have rendered a valuable service in showing that the outer history need not be taken into account as long as we have a self-authenticating revelation.

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[3] I. **The Reality of the Word of God, pp. 18–125.**
    A. The Three Forms of the Word of God: Sermons, Canon, Revelation.
    B. The Word of God and the Preacher.
    C. The Word of God and the Hearer.
    D. Man's Knowledge of Himself in the Word of God.

II. **God's Revelation, pp. 126–333.**
    A. The Trinity: Father, Son and Spirit.
    B. The Incarnation: 1. Objective Possibility of Incarnation. 2. Prophecy and Fulfilment. 3. The Birth of Jesus.
    C. The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit: 1. The subjective possibility of Revelation. 2. Grace and Religion. 3. Faith and Obedience.

III. **The Bible, pp. 334–410.**
    1. God as Witnessed by Prophets and Apostles. 2. Authority of the Church. 3. Freedom of conscience.

IV. **The Church, pp. 411–463.**
    1. God in the Sermon. Man's Word and God's Word in the Sermon. 2. The Dogmatic Norm. 3. Dogmatic Thinking.

2. The Bible a Conglomerate of Writings According to Barthianism

We inquire how we can know that there was a revelation as recorded in the Old Testament and the New, or that there ever was an Abraham, Moses, Christ or Paul, without authentic codes or documents? Only a few Barthians have the courage to state categorically their underlying thought. Some Barthian literature, however, clearly indicates the critical views of the school. In Thurneysen's *"The Word of God and the Church,"* 1927, there is a chapter on *"Scripture and Revelation"* pp. 28–63. Thurneysen is an uncommonly clear and logical thinker and states with unflinching consistency what would seem to be the real Barthian tenets at this point.

The key-note of the chapter runs thus: "It is the crowning credit of Liberalism through the application to the Bible of the historical-critical viewpoint to have made it impossible to support revelation through any grounds of reason whatsoever *(durch irgendwelche rationalen Gründe zu stützen)*....God can be understood only through his word. A revelation which must be supported by grounds of reason is no revelation...It grounds itself, or it is not revelation" (p. 53). In Barthianism reason is antithetic to faith.

For Thurneysen, Scripture is "a conglomerate of writings which constitute the Bible" (p. 29), "a theme, whose extraordinary character consists in this, that it lies in a Yonside of knowledge withdrawn from all human means of knowledge *(in einem allen menschlichen Erkenntnismitteln entzogen Jenseits der Erkenntnis)* (30), whose central content lies in the most exclusive sense outside the world of human knowledge and existence" (30). As to the Old Testament "the unity of origin is completely shattered" (35). "The self-evidence in which the truth of God appears, is in no sense to be confused with the self-evidence of a universal truth of reason" (42). When this truth of God emerges, that is when it really comes to a knowledge of God, we have to do, not with a truth directly known to all rational beings, but with a truth which in order to become really true needs special illumination and revelation. This divine truth appears "as a revelation, as a once-for-all, special...fact." Revelation is hidden, invisible, transcendent and cannot be recorded.

The fact that revelation is invisible is a proof "of the incidental nature of the form in which revelation appears and must appear. This form is the happening described in the words of the Bible...For historical knowledge the Bible cannot be a unit; it is an accidental *(zufälliges)* conglomerate of writings, whose only bond is just this factually so little evident declaration of the canon, which includes all of them" (45).

How can "an accidental conglomerate" contain a revelation of God? How does this harmonize with Barth's *double predestination?*

3. Thurneysen Accepts the Current Negative Criticism of the Pentateuch

Having propounded the thesis that revelation is exclusively in the realm of the hidden and invisible, Thurneysen allows that the critics are justified in applying the principle of literary-historical analysis to the Bible no less than to other ancient writings and that "they were the ones to approach the problem of revelation on the only correct presupposition, namely, that revelation as such is not susceptible of proof in the field of historical happenings" (48)[4]

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[4] Nevertheless, these "accidental and unhistorical" writings, composed

Thurneysen reviews briefly successive stages in the dismemberment of the Pentateuch *("Der Liberalismus mit seiner Skepsis hat grundsätzlich recht")* through the Wellhausen hypothesis and later the religious-historical school, and the bringing together of material from Babylon, Egypt, Hellenism, the rabbis and India (54) and "the Historical unreliability of the transmitted strata" (60).

Reformation exegesis, according to Thurneysen, was disposed to accept without question "the credibility of the Biblical authors and failed to distinguish between the "Urkunde" and a happening back of the "Urkunde." There is a "relativity" in all the original sources.[5]

4. *Thurneysen's Appreciation of Bernhard Duhm, the Grafian*

Thurneysen resumes the question of revelation in a paper on "Revelation in the History of Religion and in the Bible" in an appreciation *(Zum Gedächtniss)* of Bernhard Duhm, in *Zwischen den Zeiten*" VI, pp. 453–477).[6] In

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of poetry, legends and myths, constitute by authority of the Church the canon, to the exclusion of books of high order. Underneath them is a revelation of God. Thurneysen's argumentation here is not clear. He makes much of the self-evident truth of Scripture and justly so; but how can the Word of God be extracted from "an accidental and unhistorical conglomerate?" "Not because a book is in the canon is it a witness of revelation, but it is in the canon because it is a witness of revelation." Why is not Ecclesiasticus in the canon as well as the Song of Songs?

[5] "Was uns an der reformatorischen Exegese vor allem der neutestamentlichen Schriften sofort befremdet und unser historisches Empfinden störend auffällt, das ist die Voraussetzung der vollen Glaubwürdigkeit in allem Wesentlichen, unter der sie an die Biblischen Autoren herangeht. Sie unterscheidet gar nicht zwischen der Urkunde und einem hinter der Urkunde liegenden, durch sie hindurch erst mühsam zu eruierenden historischen Geschehen, in dem Sinne, dass sie eines gegen das andere kritisch abwägen würde" (57). How can we get back of the "Urkunde" without accepting the credibility of the extant records?

[6] What is Grafianism? The divisive critics denying that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, hold that of the four chief documents composing the Hexateuch (the Pentateuch plus Joshua), the chief or Priest Code arose in

his *"Theologie der Propheten,"* Duhm takes high ground on the Jehovah religion as over against the Baal worship, but in regard to the Pentateuch he is a Grafian. Perplexed as were all critics on the relation of the Codes, Graf conceived the brilliant idea (according to his followers) of placing the Priest Code last of all, chiefly on the Hegelian, Comptean, evolutionistic ground that in literature, legislation, religion, as well as in individuals, the crude, comes first, then the less crude and finally the more perfect. On various grounds, therefore, Graf placed the P Code in 445 B.C. Of this Bernhard Duhm writes: "Nothing in fact is simpler than the Grafian hypothesis: it only needs the transference of a single source, namely the Priest Code, into the post-Exilic time, into the period of Ezra and Nehemiah, and at one stroke the Mosaic period is *wiped out." (op. cit.* p. 17).

The Priest Code includes some of the Principal parts of Genesis, as 1:1—2:3; 5:1–32; 6:9–22 and long sections and chapters; the greater part of Exodus and Numbers, all of Leviticus (except chapters 17–26) and a considerable part of Joshua, chs. 13–22. Not only the first account of the Creation, but the fundamental institutions of the Old Testament (as the Sabbath and sacrifice) are recorded in the Priest Code. The assignment of the P Code to

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445 B.C., a date so late that it contains for the most part, not history, but oral tales, myths and legends. The significance of this will be clearer if the reader is reminded of the dates assigned by the Grafians to the four Codes. The J Code, from the word Jehovah, about 900–700 B.C. The E Code, designated by the letter E, from the use of Elohim for God, about 850–700 B.C. The Deuteronomic or D Code, the book of Deuteronomy, assumed to have originated between 721–621 B.C. The Priest Code, 445 B.C. Assuming that these documents existed separately for a longer or shorter time, the Graf-Wellhausen school holds that about 650 B.C., a redactor, or editor selected from J and E what suited his purpose, giving rise to the composite work of JE. Then, possibly, during the Exile another editor combined D with JE. Sometime after 445 an editor, taking P as the base dovetailed the other Codes into P, yielding substantially our present Pentateuch. We are interested in this theory only to point out its bearing on the historical character of the Pentateuch or Hexateuch.

445 B.C., means not only a *wiping out* of Moses and the Mosaic age but also of all preceding Biblical history and prophecy and of references to Christ and the Apostles and to everything antedating 900 B.C., the assumed critical date of the Jehovah Code.

Duhm accordingly has a low view of Israel's early history and of revelation, there being originally no definite knowledge of either.[7] "In truth," says Duhm, "neither the Old nor the New Testament knows a revelation in the sense of Dogmatics" (*op. cit.* 74). We conclude that Thurneysen, as admirer of Duhm, accepts not only the Grafian criticism, but also a low view of history. The tail goes with the hide.

5. Has the Mosaic Period Been Wiped Out?

Since Barthians accept the Grafian documentary theory of the Pentateuch ("wiping out the Mosaic period") it is necessary to ask whether we are driven to this conclusion? This would mean that the records not only of the Mosaic age but of the preceding ages are of no historical or theological value, but at most oral tradition, or legends and myths. As we must come to an understanding with Barthians on this point, we ask, Is the case really as desperate as the Grafian contention implies? If the Priest Code was written as late as 445 B.C., and if the J and E Codes were no earlier than 900–700, and the whole of Deuteronomy as late as 721–621 B.C., how can Barth, Thurneysen, Brunner, gain safe footing prior to the eighth century B.C.? How can they speak of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, or any revelation at all until a late period?

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[7] "Ursprünglich fehlt sogar der hebräischen Religion das Moment der Erkenntnis und die Reflexion auf ihren Ursprung fast gänzlich: Der Vater des Menschen oder des Volkes ist auch der erste Knecht Gottes, mit dem Bestand des Volkes ist auch seine Religion gegeben....Es verathen aber, wie sich zeigen wird, die Propheten deutlich genug, dass sie Organe der Offenbarung in dem herkömmlichen Sinne des Wortes sich gar nicht halten." (p. 75.)

(1) *Grafianism A Naturalistic World-View*

Over against this naturalistic hypothesis it is proper to direct attention to a conservative and theistic criticism which likewise accepts the theory of the Codes but places them at a considerably earlier date. It is a scholarly and influential German school, headed by Dillmann, Kittel, Klostermann, who place the "*Grundschrift*," much earlier than the Grafians. Thus Kittel: "The earliest stratum, partly containing the groundwork of the law of Holiness and partly that of P, may justifiably be placed in a comparatively early period, at any rate from that of Solomon downward (tenth and ninth centuries)" *(Hist. Hebrews,* I, p. 132). Dillmann cites passages in P of early date. For the historical sections the Priest Code depends largely on written sources, according to Dillmann.[8] Oral tradition is too vague and aimless to suit the historian's purpose. The reduction of the old material to narratives containing a religious purpose was the work of early scribes already in the Joshua, if not in the Mosaic period. "That P had access to very ancient sources is evident from the genealogies of Shem, Ishmael, Edom and the lists in Genesis 46; also Numbers, chapters 1, 3, 13, 26, 34, etc., and especially from the narratives concerning Enoch, the landing on Ararat, the rainbow, cave of Machpelah, plague of flies, etc." (Dillmann, *Handbuch zum Alten Testament).*[9]

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[8] "Since the narratives of the creation and of the deluge, and the list of the Noachic races (Gen. 10) are decidedly more archaic in P, than in J, the dependence of P, on J, for the primeval history cannot be conceded; on the contrary, we must infer that in its first part the present J Code contains elements which are incorporated on the basis of P. The perceptible P coloring in Gen. 6:7 and 8:21, would in this event be explained" (Dillmann, p. 656).

[9] "Some of P.'s matter must have been based on special written sources; as the names of Esau's wives (Gen. 26:34; 28:9); the name Padden Aram; the contest of Moses and Aaron with the Egyptian magicians; the place of Aaron's death (Num. 20:23; the murmuring of the people at Marah,

(2) *The Late Date of the Priest Code Not Proved*

According to Dillmann "it is inconceivable that a post-Exilic priest, or priests would have dared contrary to contemporary prophecy (Zech. 1:2–6) and the dominant D Code (as claimed by our opponents), to introduce sharply antagonistic laws, and contrary to Ezekiel 44 (Zadokites) to install the Aaronites as priests, or to favor laws of tithing and fasts antagonistic to those of J, E, D, and Ezekiel." It is difficult to understand why an author of the fifth pre-Christian century in writing a law-book for an obscure people in a Persian province should incorporate minute ordinances on the Ten Tribes, the Levitical cities, the ark of the covenant, Urim and Thummim and other matters not suitable to his age. Again, if the code was prepared in the Ezraic period, why is it silent on matters of vital concern for the new community, such as prohibition of mixed marriages, the service of the Levitical singers, musicians, door-keepers, etc.? Why finally is the law of the Passover different from the practice of Ezra's time?

(3) *The Mosaic, A Creative Age*

Far from conceding that the Mosaic age has been "wiped out," the Dillmann school has amassed a wealth of proof that the P Code, if not in the final form, the earliest, is at any rate in its primary form a very early source, antedating the matter in J and E. With the failure to prove that P is the latest Code, the Grafians have failed to prove the naturalistic and evolutionistic hypothesis of a continuous advance from the lowest to the highest in the religion of Israel. "The dogma of a gradual development from a lower to a higher level is not sustained by the history of the Oriental peoples. History leaves upon us, on

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(Exodus 15:24); the peculiar Balaam narrative (Num. 22:24; 31:8, 16); and the controversy with the East-Jordanic tribes" (Dillmann).

the contrary, the impression of decadence rather than of advancing civilization, which tries to find fixed forms; everywhere in art, science, and religion, this is confirmed" (Otto Weber, *Theologie u. Assyriologie*).

The Mosaic period was in fact the creative, originating, *bahnbrechend* period of the Old Testament religion, upon which the prophets built.

B. WAS ABRAHAM AN HISTORICAL FIGURE, OR A MYTH

As seen above, Barth writes: "What matters it whether figures like Abraham and Moses are products of later myth-making,——believe it who can" (*WGuT*. p. 65). What then becomes of all reference to Abraham in the later Old Testament prophecies and in the New Testament? Do not such utterances undermine the Bible as an authentic and credible record, and Christianity as an historical religion? "Before Abraham was, I am," said Christ. Was Christ mistaken? Over against the Barthian scepticism we offer proof that Abraham was as much an historic figure as Hammurabi.

1. *Early Canaanite Libraries*

Between 2,000–1400 B.C., Canaan was a land of books and libraries. It is well known that in the period of the Amarna tablets writing and literature were cultivated in Canaan. Kiriath-Sepher (Book-Town) must have been "the seat of a library like those of the great cities of Babylon and Assyria and a library which doubtless consisted in large measure of books on clay that may be brought to light" (Sayce). It is probable that there were libraries in Canaan at considerably earlier date. In Babylonia places of worship were also seats of learning, and so every temple had its library. Babylonian precedent would also obtain in Canaan in 2,000 B.C.

The Hebrews produced a very creditable literature in the period of the Judges, e.g., the Song of Deborah, the Book of the Wars of Jehovah, etc. It is probable that these works are types of other prose and poetic writings, of which unfortunately the Old Testament makes no mention. It is therefore antecedently probable that a considerable part of the Pentateuch is of early, even Mosaic origin.

E. Koenig writes: "Upon the basis of the above described cultural relations of the patriarchs and of the positive traces of credibility in Israelitish literature, the conclusion appears perfectly valid, that not only tradition, but also written records from the pre-Mosaic age are found in the Pentateuch.. . . This seems to be the only adequate explanation of the fact that before Moses stages of progress are distinguished" (*Einl.* p. 180).[10]

2. The Abraham-Melchizedek Chapter

Christ was to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek. What becomes of Ps. 110:4, and Hebrews 5:6, and chapter 7, if Melchizedek was not an historical personage? The appearance of Abraham and Melchizedek on the stage of the world-history is described in one and the same chapter, the fourteenth of Genesis, the crux of criticism. In Haupt's Rainbow Bible it is printed in a special color to differentiate it from J, E, and P *Codes.* Does the chapter record facts or myths?"

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[10] König continues: "The Abraham narratives in Genesis do not sound as if they were sagas and myths. Abraham is a nomadic chief with a merely temporary abode in Canaan and must purchase a burying-place for his dead. Would not the picture of his condition have been painted differently by oral tradition after a lapse of five hundred or a thousand years?" A German archaeologist, E. Sellin writes: "The traditional matter in Genesis 1—11, was in all probability brought to Canaan by the family of Abraham" **(Bib. Urgesch)**. So, too, Kittel: "These chapters are based on records brought by Abraham from the East and long known to Israel" **(Oriental, Ausgrab.** u.s.w. p. 30). According to Sayce, "Every organized religion has its sacred books. They have been as indispensable as an organized priesthood....The sacred book binds a religion to its past...It it the ultimate authority" **(Relig. Anc. Egypt and Babylon)**.

Nearly all the names of persons and places have been verified from extant Babylonian inscriptions. Amraphel is a modified form of Hammurabi, Chedorlaomer is Kudurlagamar, Arioch is Eriaku, Tidal is probably Thudkulu. Sodom, Gomorrah, Adma, Zeboim, are mentioned elsewhere.[11]

An increasing number of scholars allow that the historic setting of the chapter, even in details, is in remarkable agreement with the political situation in 2,000 B.C. "It is settled beyond reasonable contradiction that this chapter stands on historic ground" (W. H. Green, *Unity of Genesis*, p. 198).[12]

C. HOW BARTHIANS UNDERMINE THE CREDIBILITY OF SCRIPTURE

1. *The Brunner-Bultmann Radically Negative Criticism*

In a recent book Brunner writes unflinchingly: "I myself am an adherent of a rather radical school of Biblical criticism, which, for example does not accept the Gospel of John as an historical source and which finds legends in many parts of the synoptic gospels" *(The Theology of Crisis,* p. 41). Brunner therefore cuts out the heart of the New Testament, for the sections cited below are found in the fourth gospel only.[13] Brunner nowhere states his reasons for rejecting the fourth gospel "as an historical source," but they are doubtless those of the Tuebingen school (dead these many years). In any case he rejects the very gospel which supports the Logos doctrine, "a transcendent redemption," "the word become flesh," "the way, the truth and the life," and the whole group of situations revealing the inner life and spirit of the Son of God. It is pre-eminently the spiritual gospel, as seen in discourses, especially in the latter part. Brunner virtually casts aside invaluable New Testament testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. If there were no other objections to Brunner's destructive and revolutionary criticism of Scripture, his rejection of the great "Spiritual Epic" of the New Testament would be enough to cast suspicion on this *wonderful "Theology of Crisis."*

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[11] Hommel remarks: "The reader will understand why it is that this chapter has come to be a sort of shibboleth for the two leading schools of O. T., critics...It is a question of the nature of history itself which divides the students of the O. T. into two irreconcilable factions" (An. Heb. Trad., p. 64).

[12] Kittel says: "It seems to me to be in the highest degree probable that in Genesis 14, we have a historical reminiscence of an ancient date. At any rate this theory enables us far more easily to imagine how the passage originated than the other hypothesis does" (Hist. I, p. 178).

[13] The Word, John 1:4; the Testimony of John the Baptist to Jesus, 1:19–51; the marriage Feast at Cana in Galilee, 2:1–11; Jesus goes to Je-

Professor R. Bultmann, Marburg, a staunch Barthian, as shown above (p. 40), is as radical a New Testament critic as Brunner. Five years ago he published an article on *"Das Problem einer theologischen Exegese des Neuen Testaments."* One of the most discriminating reviews of the article and of Bultmann's position in general as well as of the Dibelius historical school is from the pen of M. Goguel in a French quarterly. Goguel writes: "I shall now attempt to show why it appears to me that what in the theses of the new school is true is not as new as they tell us, and that what is new is perhaps not true." He adds that the views of history of this school have a bearing on theology. "One of the leaders, Bultmann, has accepted the dogmatic theses of the Barthian school and proclaims with Monsieur Thurneysen the necessity of subor-

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rusalem at the Passover, and casts the traders out of the Temple, 2:13–25; Jesus discourse with Nicodemus, 3:1–2; the healing of an infirm man at Bethesda in Jerusalem, 5:1–47; Jesus restores to sight one blind from his birth, 9:1–41; Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, 11:1–54; meeting of the Sanhedrin, 11:45–53; Jesus arrives at Bethany six days before the Passover, 12:1, 9–11; Jesus appears to the Apostles, Thomas being present, 20:24–29.

dinating history and exegesis to spiritual *(pneumatiques)* prepossessions." At the close of a long account of the new method, Goguel asks whether on such principles a history of antiquity is possible?[14]

Bultmann is the author of a work on *"Jesus."* Not having access to the original we quote from the French reviewer, who shows that the work is extremely radical, denying practically the historical character of the gospels and any authentic account of the life of Jesus. He declares in so many words that "of the life and personality of Jesus we know *practically nothing."*[15]

Among the Germans who have reviewed Bultmann's "Jesus" is Dr. Erich Foerster, Frankfurt á Main. The book, says Foerster, "is written with a decidedly Barthian tendency, or, perhaps it is better to say, under the influence of the philosophical-theological presuppositions in which the Barthian theology is rooted; that is to say under the influence of philosophers of quite diverse principles, as Kierkegaard, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, Natorp, Blumhardt, theoretical socialists, and other philosophical thinkers." [Luther and Calvin are not mentioned, as if their influence were negligible.] The book is one of a series on *"The Immortals";* but through inexplicable circumstances Bultmann finds less proof of the historical character of Jesus than of some others. However, it matters little, for the history of Jesus is immaterial *(gleichgültig)*. His message is not to be accepted so much on the basis of history and the Biblical records as on account of "its objective content" *(um ihre objektiven Inhalts willen) (Zeitsch. f. Theologie u. Kirche,* 1928).

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[14] "On peut se démander quelle histoire, surtout quelle histoire de l'antiquité resterait possible (**"Revue de l'histoire des Religions**, Vol. XCI).

[15] "J' estime, ecrit-il dans l'introduction de son nouveau volume, que ce que nous pouvons savoir de la vie et de la personalité de Jesus, c'est autant dire rien" (**so gut wie nichts**).

Let us sum up the situation. According to Barth the Bible contains inaccuracies, numerous errors, myths and legends; Thurneysen by accepting the Grafian theory of the Priest Code "wipes out" the Mosaic age; Brunner does not accept the Gospel of John as "an historic source"; and Bultmann says that we have practically nothing on "the life and personality of Jesus." These results follow the Barthian idea that fallible man cannot understand and therefore cannot record a divine revelation.

2. Is Barth's Exegetical Method Allegorical?

The question has been asked, What is the principle of interpretation adopted by Barth in his commentary on Romans? Why have Barthians, as a French writer asks, confined themselves "almost exclusively to the epistolary literature of the New Testament? Is not Barth's method the allegorical?" There have been heated discussions between Brunner and Koehler, Brunner and Gressmann, and articles on Bultmann's suggestion of a new method of New Testament exegesis. A professor of the Protestant faculty of the University of Strasbourg, has tried in a review article to pour oil on the troubled waters.[16]

According to the allegorical method of interpretation (Origen) "the profound meaning of the text has been intentionally concealed by the author. In the allegorical exegesis there are two or even three or more meanings of the Biblical word. According to the grammatical-objective or historical exegesis there is only one meaning, which the exegete is to discover...It must be assumed that the Biblical author wished to be understood by the readers of his day and so he may not couch his thoughts in enigmatical language which would lead to confusion" (Cullmann). In strict allegory the veiled meaning is the true one and is supposed to have been primary in the mind of the writer or of God who inspired him. Since in Barthianism the truths of revelation cannot be understood by man they must be presented in a Delphic, hidden, concealed form, bordering, to say the least, on the allegorical.[17]

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[16] O. Cullmann on "Les Problèmes posés par la méthode exégétique de l'école de Karl Barth" in "Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses Jan., 1928. "Cette opposition [between two schools of exegesis] s'est manifestée avec beaucoup d' éclat dans la récente discussion entre le théologien zurichois Brunner et Gressmann: Brunner prétendant que les idées exprimées dans Genese 3 se trouvent sur un plan inaccessible au professeur d'ancien Testament **(so heisst unsere Antwort kurz, dass in dieser Region,** in der sich Gen. 3 und Römer 5 bewegen, der Alttestamentler von Ruf als **solcher gar nichts zu suchen hat)** et Gressmann déclarant une guerre sans merci à l'interprétation dogmatisante de Brunner" **(op. cit. p. 70).**

What is Barth's exegetical principle in interpreting Romans? Is it valid for all Scripture, or only for certain books, e.g., the New Testament epistles? "The exegesis of Barth and his school professes to be something else than an edifying corollary of scientific exegesis. Barth complains that critics, as Juelicher, wish to relegate his *Romans* to the quiet pastures of practical theology...It is a question whether Barth's method is the correct one ...The exegete deals with two kinds of documents: those which record strictly historical events and those which develop certain philosophical and religious conceptions. It is the second kind that Barth has in view. However, Barth treats the Bible curtly and skimpingly, especially the Gospels...It must be said that the introduction in the preceding century of the method known as the Grammatical-historical was hailed as a check on allegorical and false methods."

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[17] "Pour exprimer sa pensée, l'auteur biblique a choisi les concepts de son temps, non pas pour en cacher la veritable signification a ceux que n'auraient pas **la gnosis**, mais au contraire pour être compris de tous ses contemporains. Si ces concepts, clairs pour les premiers lecteurs, ne le sont plus de nos jours, ils ont besoin d'étre remplaces par d'autres, exprimant pour l'homme moderne, la même verite biblique de la façon actuellement la plus adequate" (p. 81).

Cullmann calls attention to the fact that certain Biblical books rank midway between the strictly historical and the strictly doctrinal. They may be regarded as superhistorical *(sur un plan supra-historique)*. Even here the grammatical-historical method is legitimate as over against the dialectic, paradoxical or allegorical procedure. As to the above referred-to Brunner-Gressmann controversy, in which Brunner denied and Gressmann affirmed the historicity of the early chapters of Genesis, the truth probably lies between these extremes. The narrative is historical-symbolical, the facts, as in all historical writing being idealized.

Barth's paradoxical method of describing history, grace, faith, the fall, the Church, Jacob, Esau, Moses, Pharaoh, etc., borders possibly on the allegorical. In any event "Barth appears to us to have hesitated thus far to apply his exegetical method to the gospels. We fear that he would fail in any such attempt." Some of his followers have been less discreet.[18]

Cullmann holds that a religious doctrine is not simply a state of the soul expressed in intellectual categories, but an objective truth just as any scientific truth, but appropriated only in an act of religious contemplation presupposing faith. "This theory of knowledge is not that of Barth and his associates; they are committed to the Kantian and especially Neo-Kantian dualism and maintain an absolute separation between faith and knowledge...Here we return to the exegetical principles applied with such signal success by Calvin and Luther." According to Cullmann, Barth's method is far from being strictly Grammatical-historical, due to his low view of history. Unquestionably one must draw the meaning of Scripture from the language of the text and not, as Barth argues, from an assumed *hidden*, transcendentally latent meaning.[19]

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[18] "C'est à tort que certains jeunes néophytes 'barthiens' lui prètent cette idée et croient, dans leur enthousiasme, pouvoir se dispenser du travail historique."

At the same time Cullmann inclines to the view that Barth's method is not meant to be allegorical. "But has the author of the commentary on *Romans* escaped the danger of an allegorical exegesis? Has he everywhere expressed the thought of Paul, as Paul would have expressed it, were he writing his epistles today? Has he not sometimes found in the text meanings not justified by what is elsewhere known of Paul's language?" Cullmann charges that Barth often does violence to the text by equating persona and things quite incongruous, as Jacob and Esau, Israel and the Church, and that "the *transposition* of the term *law* into that of *piety* is still more arbitrary and comes very near the allegorical method, which seeks to find in the text an idea dear to the interpreter. It is necessary to be extremely cautious in the matter of substituting one word for another and it is especially desirable that the exegete be not only a theologian, but a historian as well."

Finally, "since Barth is not an historian and has not brought his impressions under proper control, he has not in all cases avoided the danger of allegorizing, in seeking to embody the truths entertained by Paul in the language of the twentieth century" (*op. cit.* p. 83).

Over against the tendency of Barthians to see hidden, inexplicable, mysterious, transcendental things in Scripture, together with their rejection of history, we place

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[19] "Ce retour aux réformateurs ne signifie pas que nous n'ayons rien à apprendre de l'admirable travail accompli par la critique, surtout pendant le dernier siècle. Le pneuma a dû nécessairement revêtir une forme historique et c'est seulement grâce à la méthode historique, philologique et psychologique que nous pouvons comprendre cette forme, et d'autre part c'est seulement, aprés la comprehension exacte de la forme que nous pouvons saisir le contenu."

Luther's experience: "When I was a monk I allegorized everything, but now I have given up allegorizing and explain Scripture according to the simple sense; for it is in *the literal sense that power, doctrine and art reside.*"

Summary

It follows that in order to have a Bible in any sense there must be authentic written documents, "The necessity of having a written record of revelation, such as the Scriptures, is evident from the fact that the subject matter would then be preserved in greater purity, and also be rendered more widely accessible. When we take into account the fact when men begin to think they begin to differ; the variations of testimony arise when argument is based upon individual recollection merely, we are convinced that the final appeal in matters of faith must be made to the 'word and to the testimony,' i.e., to documentary evidence. Depending upon states of mind, as of the 'inward light of the Spirit,' claimed by the members of the society of Friends, is unreliable, since there may be as many standards of belief as there are persons to entertain them. As in courts of justice duly authenticated documents are held to be true evidence, so in matters of faith, the literature of a religion becomes in the course of time the standard of authority" (D. Van Horne, *Religion and Revelation,* p. 81).

CHAPTER VIII

THE BIBLE AS THE INFALLIBLE WORD OF GOD

The Christian Church has always held that the Bible is divine-human, a revelation of God to man, embodied in the language of men, but an inseparable unit. The Barthian conception is radically different. Though the Bible as a book is like every other book and is no more reliable as history than Greek chronicles, it becomes by the infusion of a mysterious, super-rational, transcendental element the word of God. The Bible in itself is not the word of God, but as a book must be supplemented by one's capacity to see and feel, its heaven-originating message and revelation. Here again, we have the Thisside and the Yonside, the No and the Yes. Here, the cosmic-eschatological, the dualistic-Scriptural theory is tested as nowhere else. Can it surmount the difficulty?

A. God's Revelation. Barth's Position

The Bible is a witness of God's revelation of Himself. The revelation of God in Christ is the foundation, and norm of faith. Though God cannot be known through reason, he is known primarily through the personal Word (Logos), Christ Jesus. Only God through the Holy Spirit can cause the Word to be known in the heart of the faithful.

1. *What is Revelation?*

If there be a spiritual (divine) revelation, it must relate to the unseen (2 Cor. 4:18), the physically invisible. The real Christ, as Spirit, could not be seen by men. The only real world, as says also Fairbairn, *Phil. Christ. Re-*

ligion, is that of Spirit; matter, force, life are creations of Spirit. Hence, we cannot know God until we are born from above.

2. The True Revelation

Barth's conception of revelation differs radically from contemporaneous theologies. He rejects both the theory of psychological and experimental immediacy of Schleiermacher and his school and the rationalistic *apriorism* of orthodox theology; that is, the alleged natural consciousness of God on the one hand and the reasoned, discursive method of cognizing God on the other. The reality of spiritual entities cannot be proved as one would prove the reality of a crystal, electricity, or a grain of wheat. As ultimates shining in their own light, spiritual realities are not susceptible of proof by man-devised logic. God can be known only through Himself, as revealed in Scripture.

The extant Bible contains extraordinary, inexplicable happenings in the realm of Spirit, a primitive revelation *(Urgeschichte)*. Scripture is grounded not so much in the witness of prophets and apostles as in a third datum lying further back, a self-revelation of God. It is necessary to distinguish between the historical witnesses and the original, the more than historical revelation. Sixteenth century protestantism still held that the *Deus dixit* is not the same as the *Paulus dixit,* although the latter is the word of God. Until a later period both Lutheran and Reformed dogmatics distinguished between an unwritten and a written, an immediate and a mediate revelation.[1]

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[1] "We distinguish thus: The word of God in its original form in which it was spoken immediately in history, at the border of primitive history; the word of God in its second form, in the witnesses of revelation in prophets and apostles; and the third form, in which through the written word it becomes the content of the Christian sermon. But **verbum domini manet in aeternum.** Therefore whether in the first, second or third form it is none other than the word of God" (Dog. I, p. 46). In other places Barth classifies thus: Original revelation, Logos, Bible. Then he adds

3. Revelation Not A Species Of Historism

Barth uses the term *historism* to denote the theory that one can prove divine revelation by the method that is valid in determining the date and facts, say of the battle of Arbela. Such a method is illicit here for it implies that an inner, invisible, spiritual occurrence may be determined by outer, visible, unspiritual data. According to Barth both the so-called orthodox and heterodox views are defective in overemphasizing the outer historicity at the risk of overlooking the inner reality. Old and New Testament exegetes are prone to insist on the very letter of the text, forgetting that the letter killeth and only the Spirit maketh alive.

Furthermore, a matter of faith cannot be settled by historico-scientific methods. Faith, as an ultimate datum, rests on its own verisimilitude, and not on the evidence of the senses or of ordinary ratiocination. The question, Who was Jesus Christ? cannot in its inner character be answered in the same way as one would prove who Julius Caesar was. The life and works of the former, as even the fragmentary records show (indeed from the very fact of discrepancies and possible contradictions in the gospels) move in the plane of the eternal and spiritual; the life and works of the latter, on the plane of the temporal, transitory, and in fact sensuous and sensual.

4. Outer History Of Minor Value In Things Spiritual

Barth holds that the Biblical records are the shell containing the kernel and can be understood and interpreted only through faith, an endowment of the Holy Spirit. He concedes to history its legitimate province of recording and evaluating the ordinary affairs of men and nations.

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the sermon. It is not very clear. Above all, apart from what we call transcendental mediation through faith, Barth offers no explanation.

But even here, men are not agreed as to what constitutes history.

It matters little. If there was not an historical Abraham, there must have been some man in the distant past who so believed in God and his promises that it was "accounted to him for righteousness," a conception transcending human thought and origination. If there was not an actual Moses, the deliverer of Israel and the author of the Ten Words, the writers of the J, E, D, and P Codes severally and jointly, either recorded actual and inexplicable transactions, or perpetrated the most astounding "fraud" in all literature.

B. REVELATION AND TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION

According to Barth, the Bible, the word of God, is the special revelation of God to man. Since things in time are finite, evanescent, nugatory, man as a creature of time, sense and limited perception, has only a minor, relatively subordinate, part in the reception of the primal revelation and its embodiment in human language. The Spirit is everything, the letter nothing. Revelation and Scripture are not identical; the basic principle throughout is that of revelation. For lynx-eyed historical research, the Bible woven together through a thousand years is *not* a unit. Its sole inner unity, the characteristic mark of the Bible, consists in the uniform claim throughout that extraordinary happenings are recorded, says Barth.[2]

Of the several hundred thousand textual variations recorded by critics, a comparatively small number affect Christian doctrine. As Dr. W. R. Harper, of the University of Chicago, used to say and as in 1888 he remarked to the writer: "All history is idealized history"; and as a logician writes: "All fact is theorized fact...Of fact entirely free from theory we have no experience: we can speak of it in words, but can form no conception of it" (A. Sidgwick, *The Application of Logic,* p. 231). Something, however, must be accepted as fact, before a conclusion is possible.

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[2] "The sacred writers were so influenced by the Holy Spirit that their writings are as a whole and in every part God's word to us" (A. A. Hodge). "What has been said confirms the inner UNITY of the Bible" (Van Oosterzee).

1. *The Minor Value Of History*

In the Römerbrief commentary Barth attaches little value to history, that is the bare facts or representation of facts; the resurrection of Christ was an historical fact, not in the ordinary, but in the transcendent sense. This whole conception is an integral part of his denial of the reality of things and events in time. He enters into the matter more fully in *The Word of God* than in the *Römerbrief,* but recedes somewhat from an extreme position in the *Dogmatik.* In *The Word of God* we discover what seems to be his fundamental thesis, namely that in true Ritschlian style, we must concede the impossibility of recovering the original sources or even faithful transcripts and so had better give up any attempt in this direction.

Coming to a formulation of his view of religious history Barth writes in bold Italics: "At the moment when religion becomes conscious of religion, when it becomes a psychologically and historically conceivable magnitude in the world, it falls away from its inner character, from its truths to idols. Its truth is its other-worldliness, its refusal of the idea of sacredness, its non-historicity" (*WGuT.* p. 68).

2. *Ordinary History Merely The Husk*

Barth argues that we have a total misconception of what constitutes history in the Bible. The object, especially in the Old Testament, is not the record of history at all, but to present the underlying spiritual truths. So-called history is merely the husk, hiding the real essence.

Barth devotes page after page to his premise that history, ordinary history, chronicle of events, is not real history. "Biblical history in the Old and New Testament *is not history at all,* but seen from above, a series of divine transactions, seen from below a series of fruitless attempts at an impossible undertaking, and under the viewpoint of development and pragmatism simply unintelligible as a whole and in its parts, as every religious teacher who does not practice *rotten arts (faule Künste)* knows only too well" (*WGuT.* p. 83).

3. The Holy Spirit In The Sermon

Instead of postulating the Bible as the Word of God and arguing therefrom that the preacher expounds the Word, Barth pursues the opposite course and roundly affirms that the sermon is the Word of God, or nil. The preacher in himself is incapable of delivering a true message; the sermon is a hazard and indeed a hazard of the impossible. But the "Preacher is overcome by a *desperatio fiducialis,* a comfortable despair, which is not an unjust limitation, but a clothing anew with heavenly power. Under these conditions there is no objective word of God *(durchaus kein objectives Wort Gottes)* or rather the objective is here the subjective, namely, the person of God in so far as in the Bible it relates to the plan. . . The word of God addressed to man does not displace the sermon as a human impossibility upon the plane of the divine possibility" (*Dog.* pp. 62, 63, 64).

4. Man A Traveller Absent From The Lord

God is and remains subject in his word. His thoughts are not our thoughts and they do not become such. They are beyond our capacity, are transcendental. The words which pass over our lips are human words, God neither is nor becomes object otherwise than himself, not even in his word. "It is the miracle of revelation, of the incarnation of the word, of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that he just in this manner is one who is and remains the subject imparting himself to man" (*Dog.* I, p. 64).

The Biblical Text. There must, however, be an ecclesiastically authorized Biblical text. It is not an idle question whether in Romans 5:1, we read *echŏmen,* "we have peace with God," or *echōmen,* "let us have peace, etc.," (for the difference relates to two opposite systems of theology). But who shall decide? Is the answer to be left to the textual critics? In case they decide for *echōmen* they run afoul the *analogia fidei,* which is clearly for echŏmen. Shall we after all stick to the mere letter as over against accepted doctrine drawn from accredited Scripture? However, until the Church supplies a *textus receptus* and accredited translations, "the question of the true text is an open one, both on the historical and the theological side." (*Dog.* p. 371).

5. *Reasoning In A Circle*

Barth allows that his method is a *petitio principii,* a reasoning in a circle, but it is necessarily so. "To the question: How do I know the word of God I answer: herein that I have known it before I knew it (as such); herein that God has spoken it to me...With what does theology start if not with a petitio principii whether it be grace, faith or something else that is taken for granted as a major premise? Whatever starting-point is chosen in the theological investigation, be it the religious consciousness, or Christian faith, one always accepts as the ultimate ground of this science, the underived, grounded in itself, self-authenticating, self-revealing truth of God. If such a principle be regarded as in the consciousness of man, then of course it was preceded by and grounded in a higher principle. Who can examine his consciousness of God without the implication that from another source he already knows what he seeks? And so much the more fortunate for him, if perchance he does not know it and then finds something else than this principle. If theology, then, is ashamed of the *petitio principii*, i.e., the *petitio hujus principii*, then it is ashamed of the gospel and this can have only unhappy results in this world and the next" (Dog. I, p. 107). Is this not intuitionism, immediacy, immanence, against which Barth and Brunner protest so vigorously?

We see now why Barth in answering Harnack on the place of historism, textual, and literary-historical criticism adroitly both allows and questions their value as factors in authenticating the Word of God and why in the Prolegomena he practically ignores the perplexing problems of the transmission of the books of the Bible, planting himself and hazarding all on the thesis that faith, imparted by the Holy Spirit, is the key to the situation, and needs no human vehicle of expression.

6. *Barth's Conception of Biblical History*

Barth's contention is that things and events in time are phenomenal and not truly real. History, not merely ecclesiastical history, but all history is "an arraignment of history." Barth's system is probably as thorough-going a predestinarianism as the ingenuity of a fertile brain ever devised. God is at once the Absolute of philosophy and the Creator of all things. The cosmos and all therein, including man, are created non-entities. The only history is that which God enacts. All human history is a farce, comes to nothing. Page after page of Barth's writings show this.[3]

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[3] In his remarkable address on "The Strange New World Within the

Such Barthian deliverance can be understood only when one grasps the idea that matters of faith "cannot be settled by historico-scientific methods," for they belong to an entirely different, a transcendent realm, which man's science cannot enter without abandoning its major premise of nothing but natural law. The historian may understand the life of Julius Caesar, but he cannot understand the life of Jesus Christ, for spiritual, that is transcendental, things must be spiritually discerned.

Historism is incompetent to meet the crisis. God is the affirmation, man the negation; "History itself—not merely the *chronique scandaleuse* of man, but the history of the greatest of men—is the arraignment of history." As seen above there can be on earth *no real history* of the unseen and eternal. The resurrection of Jesus Christ was not an historical event, strictly speaking, but at most "historical at the border of the unhistorical" *(des unhistorischen).*

7. Object Of Old Testament Is Not To Record History

Barth's *Word of God* and *Römerbrief* reveal so many departures from traditional exegesis and interpretation and from the historicity of Scripture that he is led to the extreme of saying, Adam "stands for the old subject," the self of the earthly disposed man who has a sense for merely earthly goods, whereas Christ is "the new subject, the self of the coming world."

According to this *"crisis"* theology, the object in the

Bible," we read: "When God enters, history for the while ceases to be and there is nothing more to ask; for something wholly different and new now begins....We are led by Bible history far beyond what is elsewhere called history—into a new world, into the world of God....The Bible tells us not how we should talk with God but what he says to us; not how we find the way to him, but how he has found the way to us....We may rest assured that in the Bible, in both the Old and the New Testament the theme is, so to speak, the religion of God and never once the religion of the Jews, or Christians, or heathen." (**WGuT.** pp. 37, 41, 43, 45, 49).

Old Testament is not to record history, but to enforce underlying spiritual truths. But must there not be an historical background? Must we not hold that Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings and other historical books record events substantially as they occurred? How can there be any basis whatever for the *"primeval revelation,"* of which Barth makes so much unless it can be shown that there were theophanies and visions, that the angel of the covenant appeared to Abraham (Gen. 18) and that God spoke by the mouth of the prophets? Does not Barth's whole magnificent structure crumble unless he accepts the essentially historical character of the events and institutions of the Old Testament?

C. REVELATION AND INSPIRATION

The word revelation, translation of the Greek *apokalupsis,* means the uncovering or unveiling of something hidden so as to give light to knowledge. The Gospel which Paul preached "came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ," Gal. 1:12, and he went up to Jerusalem by revelation, Gal. 2:2.[4] In these and other cases knowledge is communicated. We shall see presently that Christianity is a revelation. Revelation means the communication of knowledge, and not a mystification, as Barthians hold. Barth writes: "Even after the revelation man cannot know God, for he is ever the unknown God. In manifesting himself to man he is farther away than ever before. . .

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[4] The verb **apokalupto,** to remove the covering from anything, is found in classic Greek: in Plato's Gorgias, "reveal to me the power of rhetoric," and in other writers. It occurs in the Septuagint, Numbers 22:31, "the Lord opened or unveiled his eyes" (Balaam's); also Ruth 4:4. The religious sense is unknown to heathenism. Apokalupsis is used in three senses in the New Testament. 1. The unveiling of something hidden, Lk. 2:32; Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3.3. 2. Insight into spiritual truth. Paul asks for the spirit of revelation, Eph. 1:17; 1 Cor. 14:6. 3. The Second Coming of Christ, 1 Peter 1:7, 13; 2 Thes. 1: 7; 1 Cor. 1:7.

The revelation in Jesus Christ. . .is at the same time the strongest veiling and unknowableness of God." (*Rbr.* pp. 353, 754). And yet as seen above, Barth allows that the prophets of the Old Testament, received a revelation through the final revelation in Christ. "I will give them a heart to know me," Jeremiah 24:7. "Knowing God, they glorified him not as God." Are all these passages and many others that could be cited, empty phrases? Impossible. "With a *tabula rasa* revelation could find no point of contact. . .*There is a notitia Dei nobis insita*" (Boehl). What could be the value of a revelation that did not yield some knowledge?

1. Relation Of Revelation And Inspiration

Revelation made a man wiser; inspiration preserved him from error in doctrine. "No prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." (1 Peter 1:21. God uses agents according to their nature and endowment; men, though the organs of God, spoke and wrote according to their individuality as intelligent and responsible agents. They were under the afflatus of the Holy Spirit. How then could that which they wrote be such "a conglomerate" as Barth and Brunner make out? Professor Brunner argues that not the *words* of Scripture but only the *sentence* is true. He is right in holding that the sentence is the unit of thought and must be construed as a whole. But he is wrong in holding that a sentence can be true if the words are false. If the words God, Christ, Holy Spirit, man, sin, atonement, sacrifice, priest, prophet, etc., have not a correct, or at least a definite meaning, or if the wrong words are used, the sentence as a whole will not convey a true meaning. One may, to be sure, appeal to the analogy of faith, but that is not the point here.

2. The Bible And The Word Of God According To Brunner

On the Bible as the Word of God Dr. Emil Brunner has interesting and significant comments. "Christian faith is Bible faith. When the Christian speaks of revelation in general he means Sacred Scripture of the Old and New Testament. This is the truth of Protestant Bible orthodoxy...The knowledge of God is to be derived from Scripture. But such knowledge is no special knowledge, which is to be co-ordinated with a greater content of knowledge. Rather, it is the knowledge of the ground of all truth; it is that which is meant ultimately in all knowing. We do not measure the Word of God in Scripture by reason, but we measure reason, every science by the Word of God" (*RPET*. p. 76)[5] There are, however, different views of Scripture. "For orthodoxy the Bible is in itself the divine truth of revelation. For genuine Christian faith Scripture is revelation only in connection with the actually present Spirit of God. The testimony of the Holy Spirit and the clarity of the Word of God are one and the same. Therefore the principle of Scripture is the paradoxical unity of autonomy and authority, of the given and not-given. Faith is a meeting with the absolutely hidden God, who as real, reveals himself to us personally. This reality is Scripture in so far as it is a witness of revelation of God in Jesus Christ. 'Ye search the Scriptures. These are they which bear witness of me,' Jno. 5:39. In the interest of this content, Scripture is the Word of God, for he, Christ, is the Word. Not in itself is it revelation, but in so far and because it has this sense, just as the words in a sentence are not in themselves true, but only through their common meaning in the sentence. Therefore the Christian speaks not of the words of God, but of the word of God" (77).[6]

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[5] "Der Christliche Glaube ist Bibelglaube. Spricht der Christ von der Offenbarung Gottes schlechthin, so meint er die Heilige Schrift Alten und Neuen Testaments. Das ist die Wahrheit der protestantischen Bibelorthodoxie... Vielmehr ist sie [die Erkenntnis Gottes] die Erkenntnis des Grundes aller Wahrheit, sie ist das in allem Erkennen letztlich Gemeinte. In ihr hat darum alle Erkenntnis ihre Norm und ihr Kriterium, ob der an ihr Beteiligte sich dessen nun bewusst sei oder night. Nicht an der Vernunft messen wir das Wort Gottes in der Schrift, sondern am Wort Gottes in the Schrift messen wir die Vernunft, jegliche Wissenschaft." (**RPET**. p. 76).

3. *Truths and Half-Truths*

In the preceding we have truths and half-truths. It is true that by revelation in the religious sense we mean Scripture, that the knowledge of God comes primarily from Scripture and that we do not judge the Word of God by reason (in the rationalistic sense). But surely Dr. Brunner would allow that he employs reason in his interpretation of Scripture and that his argumentation is reasonable. What does he mean by saying that we "measure reason and every science by the word of God?" Does he measure mathematics, physics, astronomy, chemistry by the Word of God? As the sense in which he employs the terms "reason" and "Scripture" is not clear we must suspend judgment. Is there not a contradiction in the affirmation that the *absolutely hidden* God *reveals himself?* May not revelation uncover something? Does not John 5:39, "These (the Scriptures) are they which bear testimony of me," refute Brunner?

According to Brunner the Bible bristles with all sorts of errors and inaccuracies. "The words of Scripture as such are human words...The crucifixion of Jesus was a judicial murder; this does not hinder its being the salvation of the world. It rests upon false testimony but just therein is its truth above all truth. So the Bible as a whole. It is full of errors, contradictions, false conceptions of many human, natural, historical relations. It contains many contradictions in the account of the life of Jesus; it is overgrown with legends even in the New Testament. Many of the parts are written in helpless, common, inaccurate language; others again rise to the height of magnificent literary works. The one does not disturb, the other does not enhance the faith-authority of Scripture" (79).[7]

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[6] "Glaube ist Begegnung mit dem absoluten verborgenen Gott, der als wirklich, d.h. in einem Wirklichen sich uns persönlich offenbart. Dieses Wirkliche hat die Schrift, sofern sie Zeugnis ist von der Gottesoffenbarung in Christus. Nicht sie [die Schrift] an sich ist die Offenbarung, sondern insofern und weil sie diesen Sinn hat, ebenso wie die Wörter eines Satzes nicht an sich wahr sind, sondern durch ihren gemeinsamen Sinn im Satz" (77).

If the Bible be full of errors and contradictions of every sort, how can it be the word of God? How can we reach truth? How can it be a revelation of Jesus Christ? Does not Brunner hold that the writers (prophets and apostles) were under the guidance of the Holy Spirit? If so, would they not record facts, visions, theophanies, revelations with substantial accuracy? If not, how can Brunner see more in the Bible than in the Zend-Avesta? Are we to understand that in some magical, unintelligible, transcendental manner we see Christ in the Bible? Does Brunner mean that faith selects what is true and rejects what is false? That would lead to the very doubt, dogmatism, pietism, quietism, fanaticism which he deplores. How can Barth, Brunner, Thurneysen hope to restore faith in the revelation of Scripture by undermining Scripture? By practically accepting the Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen-Stade, naturalistic criticism and philosophy? The absurdity of the Barthian-Brunner dialectics is that with all the parade about the "Word of God," there remains in the end *no Word of God,* in fact *not even of man,* for nothing that man does has permanent value.

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[7] "So die Bibel als ganzes. Sie ist voller Irrthümer, Widersprüche, irriger Anschauungen von mancherlei menschlichen, mannigfache Widersprüche im Bericht über das Leben Jesu, sie ist überwachsen mit Legende auch im Neuen Testament" (79).

4. The Bible And History

Brunner's view of history in the Bible is dominated by his view of history in general.

(1) *No Historical Unity*

We read: "There is no unity in history, no possibility of understanding it from the side of unity, i.e., no possibility of a philosophy of history...Christian faith knows nothing of world-history in the sense of a unity. The unity of faith is not historical, but the *primal* historical *(Endgeschichtliche)*, eschatological; that is, history not in its immanent self-movement, not in its relation to the God of creation and redemption (not classifiable under secular history" (*RPET*. p. 64).

Therefore Christian faith is convinced that "the revelation of Christ in respect to its revelation-quality, stands outside of the history of religion as well as outside of reason...To demand scientific proof would be as foolish as to demand scientific proof of revelation itself. That Jesus was something else than a great religious founder like Buddha, Zarathrustra, or Mohammed, can be proved scientifically as little as that he was the Son of God. Could it be proved, the proof would be quite different from that which faith means" (65).

But, says Brunner, "that which may and should be expected of a scientific investigation is proof that at any rate the structure, the inner sense and connection of the religious-historical phenomena" look in the direction of the Christian revelation-faith.

(2) *Not History And Yet History*

With his low view of history, Brunner finds it difficult to meet the objection that the Bible instead of recording facts, abounds in contradictions, human frailties, myths and legends. How does he extricate himself from the dilemma? First of all by conceding to history that outwardly the Bible has only "an accidental unity." The more remote the supposed event the greater the uncertainty. The believer, however, in accepting the very Bible which the critic rejects, relies, not on external but internal evidence, that of the Spirit, of which the critic knows nothing. Mere human testimony, even if available, would be of little, if any value, since it moves on the plane of the natural world; the believer has the testimony of the inner, spiritual, the transcendental, the real world. "If Jesus is really the Christ and if the same God who is revealed in him, authenticates himself and this revelation, there is in this, something, which for the historian is simply a point in the historical *continuum* of relative certainty, but for faith an absolute certainty" (82).

(a) *Strictly Little O. T. History, Yet a Revelation*

As to the unity of Scripture, the historian, though regarding the Bible as "a conglomerate of literary fragments" without unity, will recognize at least a similarity of thought in the Old Testament and the New Testament and "the specific differences from other religious history."

Brunner, accordingly, though allowing little value to the Old Testament as history, conceives that the inner unity authenticates what must be regarded as true history and a veritable revelation. But we ask again, How can he speak of the giving of the law to Moses on Sinai without an authentic record? Brunner's view comes to this: Not Scripture, but the Holy Spirit reveals facts to the believer, and to the believer only. The only valid evidence is inner, mystical, transcendental. External facts do not count. *Fasse es, wer's fassen kann.*

(b) *New Testament Discredited, But Jesus Is The Christ*

The historian as historian applies similar canons of criticism to the New Testament. All the books of the New

Testament ,says Brunner, the earliest as well as the latest, represent Jesus as the Christ, the redeemer of the world. Here again outer history is irreconcilable with itself. "But," says Brunner, "we have conceded more than we should. Even the historical significance and character of Jesus has been construed on two irreconcilable theories: the first, seeing in Jesus merely a prophet, teaching a pure ethical religiosity; the second, viewing him as the Messiah, with a Messianic consciousness, whose acts and teachings were directed to the eschatological *eon* and the establishment of the Messianic kingdom." It is not clear why Brunner should devote considerable space to this point, except to discredit the New Testament narratives, for he writes: "Only by an arbitrary process can the contradiction in the record be explained."[8]

What is one to think of the bold assertion that "Jesus, as well as the origin of Christianity, the resurrection and the Christ faith, are *a riddle,* a dark spot in the Continuum"? Does not the "crisis" theology undermine the whole foundation of Christianity?

5. *The Bible And Science*

If Barthianism is unsatisfactory on history and Bible criticism, it is still more unsatisfactory on the relation between Christianity and science. Barth does not enter into a detailed discussion, nor does any member of the school. Brunner touches on the subject in his Philosophy of Religion but comes to nothing definite. Matters of fact are to be left to science; the interpretation of the facts is a question for philosophy and theology, as e.g., the origin of the universe. Was it created, or is it eternal? Is there, or is there not a God? What attitude shall we take as to LaPlace's boast that he had swept the heavens with the best telescopes and could not find God?

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[8] "Nur mit Gewalttätigkeit kann der Tatbestand der Ueberlieferung von diesem Widerspruch gereinigt werden. Für den Historiker bleibt Jesus, sogut wie die Entstehung des Christentums, des Auferstehungs- und Christusglaubens, ein Rätzel, eine Dunkelstelle im Kontinuum, die nur durch willkürliche Konstruktionen weg erklärt oder fade psychologische Künste in ein Analogisches umgedeutet werden kann" (86).

Brunner makes no attempt to offset naturalism, scepticism, agnosticism and atheism, except to fall back on the thesis that revelation and faith settle the issue. If a man has faith, all is well; if he has not, nothing can be done for or with him.

Since Brunner attaches little value to history and nowhere indicates that he regards Genesis I, as credible and inspired, it is difficult to determine his exact position. Unless he accepts the Biblical account of creation he is compelled to fall back on reason (a stench in his nostrils) and so, inconsistently enough he argues that the scientific dictum of continuity from star-dust to man endangers the "sovereignty" of God and the difference between God and man.[9]

Summary: Chapters VII and VIII. The dualism of God and man, eternity and time, the Bible as the fallible Word of Man, abounding in errors, contradictions, myths and legends and the Bible as the Word of God, a supreme and absolute revelation of God in Christ, is disclosed in the citations in these two chapters. Neither Barth, Brunner, Thurneysen nor any other Barthian has reconciled this contradiction. How can a Bible full of errors be a revelation from God? There is no end of see-sawing between the No and the Yes, the Yes and the No, the Either and the Or, but there is no solution of the problem, indeed no attempted solution. We are left in doubt whether there be any Word of God at all.

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[9] "Ja, gerade das Gesetz der Stufenordnung, d.h. die kontinuierliche Annäherung, ist das, wogegen sich die göttliche Offenbarung vor allem richtet, weil in diesem Gedanken die Unterscheidung zwischen Kreatur und Kreator, das schlechterdings einzigartige Verhältnis zwischen Gott und allem was da ist, die Erkenntnis, dass keine Kontinuität vom Geschaffenen zum Schöpfer, vom menschlichen Tun zum göttlichen Schaffen und Erlösen führt, gefährdet" (**RPET.** p. 91).

CHAPTER IX

THE UNKNOWN GOD REVEALED IN CHRIST

A. BARTH'S POSITION IN OUTLINE

Time and eternity two distinct realms, an unbridged chasm between God and man, God unknown to man, the Bible the word of man and of God, the unknown God revealed in Christ, are the paradoxes and antinomies of the Barthian dialectics and theology.

The method by which Barth seeks to explain how God in Christ is made known to man is involved and not always clear. There is, he grants, an appearance of arguing in a circle. The *Römerbrief* and *Wort Gottes und Theologie* contain no formal discussion of the manner in which knowledge, revelation and faith are mediated: The *Theologie und die Kirche* yield practically nothing on this point. The *Dogmatik* can hardly be equated with the others, partly on account of the difference of subjects, but chiefly because some of the characteristic ideas of the *Römerbrief* either retire into the background, or are absent altogether. Thus, the constantly recurring dictum "We stand deeper in the No than in the Yes," does not occur at all in the later work. Likewise the Christian's "death-line" is replaced by the "wisdom-line" and the "perpendicular line." In the Dogmatics we hear little of the contention that the present world is merely a tangent to the future world.

1. God Revealed In Jesus Christ

There is no way from man to God. There is a way from God to man through Jesus Christ. "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father." Not the Jesus Christ of the critics, but Christ the Son of God, is the mediator. The Christ of the flesh is not proclaimed by Barth any more than by Paul; but the Christ crucified and risen. "Note the surprisingly meager interest of the Bible in the development of its *heroes.* There is no gripping history of the youth and conversion of Jeremiah, no report of the edifying death of Paul. To the grief of our theological contemporaries there is above all no 'Life of Jesus.' The man of the Bible stands and falls with his task, his work" (*WGuT*. p. 83; tr. p. 71).

Elsewhere we read: "God's faithfulness is shown herein, that Christ meets us in Jesus. We can therefore in spite of all human insufficiency see in the scattered historical references to God, real possibilities for God; we can therefore find in the earthly traces of divine information more than human accidents. The day of Jesus Christ is the day of all days" (*Rbr*. p. 72).

2. Jesus Reveals And Conceals God

Jesus reveals and conceals God: "The revelation in Jesus, just because it is the revelation of the righteousness of God, is at the same time the strongest conceivable veiling and unknowableness of God. In Jesus God becomes really a mystery, makes himself known as the unknown, speaks as the eternally Silent One. . . . Faith in Jesus is the venture of all ventures" (*Rbr*. p. 73).

3. The Onceness (Einmaligkeit) of Revelation

When Barth says that "The day of Jesus Christ is the day of all days," he means more than appears on the surface. He means nothing less than the underlying proposition of ONCENESS *(Einmaligkeit)* of Revelation and *that* revelation solely in Jesus Christ. If he allowed that God revealed himself in nature, man or history, it would follow that God might become known in part at least through these channels. Both he and Brunner regard this Einmaligkeit the corner-stone of their PLAN. An integral part of the plan is: *Finitum non capax infiniti.*

(1) *ONCENESS According To Barth*

Speaking of the incarnation Barth writes: "This union [of the divine-human in Christ] according to its nature could not be general or manifold, but only once-for-all and not repeatable *(nur ein einmaliges und unwiederholbares).* Not general as mysticism and speculative idealism hold. Nor manifold, for it would not occur more than once that God would come into such a relation with man. As truly as there is only *one God,* the conjunction with man could take place only once, unrepeatedly, *sui generis.* There could be no second, third, or fourth."[1]

(2) *Man A Wanderer*

Man estranged from God is a wanderer on earth. "The ancients said that the *Scriptura sacra* (Scripture, theology) appeals to the *homo viator,* to man as a traveler. Though the traveler continues to travel he must finally, whether or not he has a home, travel to the next world. He knows many things, facts, truths; but the greater his knowledge the greater his disappointment.....He has no abiding place, no rest, no peace, whether among angels or beasts, in soul or body, in nature or spirit, in the transendent or the empirical, in the ego or the non-ego. Why not? Because 'the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh' (Gal. 5:17)."

But more than this. "Man not only realizes his self-contradiction; he is the contradiction. Indeed the dialectics indicated by the term *homo viator* has also its logical-epistemological significance, but it is at bottom the old dialectics of life, which man must not only think about, but must live. The man who hears God spoken of is between Scylla and Charybdis, between two truths, which mutually render them and man (as the only third member) impossible" (*Dog.* p. 67).

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[1] "Einmal mit dem Menschsein, mit dem 'ein Mensch sein' verbunden, müsste das Gottsein sich unauflöslich, unwiederholbar, einzigartig mit ihm verbunden haben, so gewiss nur **ein** Gott ist. Das, **diese** Inkarnation, wäre dann die Offenbarung, Gottes Begegnung mit dem Menschen, keine zweite, dritte, vierte könnte daneben sein" (**Dog.** I. p. 224).

4. *The Incarnation A Revelation, Once-For-All*

Revelation is the making known of the Divine mysteries: "It is not a communication of knowledge, of a doctrine concerning God, but God's own personal Word, wherein He makes known his concealed will...Revelation is the word from the other side, from the Yonside of that which is not accessible to us men...The Word of God is that which comes from the Yonside of the line which separates God and man, God's own Word of Himself, his secret which is grounded in His sole-deity in which neither the world, nor man nor human reason has part, that which God has reserved for Himself...It is the coming over of that which from eternity was on the other side, a passage over the chasm, which no man could bridge, over which no religious, mystical, or speculative rapture can transport, the historical becoming of that which in its essence *cannot enter history* because it is eternal" (Brunner, M. p. 209).

5. *Christus Redemptor*

God comes to man's relief. The great "I am that I am" (Exodus 3:14), who appeared to Moses, the wanderer, and later as the Logos, is not only Revealer of God but the mediator between God and man (John 13:13; 20:28).

Barth brings the figure of man as a traveler, a wanderer, into relation with Christ as he seeks man. "Let us recall that the Biblical character about whom we inquire is man, *homo viator,* the man who himself has become an interrogation point, the man who sees himself in his enmity to God and contradiction with himself....It is the servant, the suffering Servant of the Second Isaiah, who, discovered in Jesus (Acts 8:20) as the crucified one, is of supreme interest to Paul, as likewise the sacrifice of the new covenant between God and man is to the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews" (*Dog.* I, p. 175).

B. OBSERVATIONS ON BARTH'S POSITION

It is unfortunate that Barth nowhere unfolds in systematic form his doctrine of the person of Christ and the incarnation, but leaves the inquirer to piece together, as best he may, fragmentary material found here and there in his writings. At the risk of not always quite catching Barth's meaning we proceed to state what we conceive to be his chief contentions.

"It is an absolute miracle that God became flesh.... Christ is a category by himself" (*AT.* pp. 88–89). The two words, Jesus Christ, mean two worlds meeting, the temporal and the eternal, the known and the unknown, the former the created world of God, but now fallen, the world of time, man and things: the latter, the world of the original creation and of man happy and unfallen. The fundamental difference between this world of sense and sin and God's real world, we must emphasize anew. Jesus Christ is the dividing line *(Schnittlinie)* between these two worlds, the term Jesus designating the *Thisside,* the term Christ designating the *Yonside.*

1. *Jesus Christ The Dividing Line Between Two Worlds*

Interpreted in plain English, Barth means that Jesus Christ is the liberating force, that religion does not know and as usually understood cannot know. With religion in the modern sense Jesus Christ has nothing to do, according to Barth, and it in turn has little to do with Jesus

Christ.[2] As Strauch expresses it: "Jesus Christ is the step over the border of the old world, the reversal of its transcendental presupposition, the emergence of the new reality. He is the actualization of that which is actual in no religion; he is the realization of the possibility, which transcends the vision of men generally" (*op. cit.* p. 20).

As seen above, Barth is less interested in the Christ of the flesh than in the Christ of the resurrection. There is in the New Testament no "life of Jesus" in the ordinary sense. Jesus moves among men very much as other men. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh. "Jesus in his incognito is a paradox, an absurdity, a grief; in the hell of his solidarity with all sin and all weakness of the flesh, a character wholly negative, with no distinctively positive qualities."

How Does Barth Read The Gospels? Jesus, "a character wholly negative," with "outer history obscure," "no positive qualities." Where in history is there to be found a character as positive and uncompromising in his teachings and works as Jesus, from the Sermon on the Mount, discourse with Nicodemus, conversation with the woman of Samaria, prophecy of the destruction of the temple to the sublime farewell address? Was he a "negative character," who, beginning with a clear, comprehensive statement of his mission, but receiving no cordial response from the official class, announced more clearly and emphatically the ultimate aim of his marvellous words and works, the absoluteness of his discourses being intensified as the confusion and virulence of his enemies increased? Was he a negative chraacter who said "tell that fox (Herod) that I cast out demons and perform cures"; who baffled the lawyers and Pharisees by asking whether it were lawful to heal on the Sabbath day; who told the rich young man to sell all and give it to the poor; who pronounced the seven scathing woes on the scribes and Pharisees; who foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and who in the mockery of trial before the Jewish authorities, Herod and Pilate, was victor though vanquished?[3]

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[2] Of the two sides of religion, the non-human objective and the human subjective, Barth here means the latter, or the prevailing as reflected in the various so-called religious-education schemes based on a false theology and a false psychology. "Religion ist ein heidnisches Wort. Die Bibel kennt es nicht und die Reformatoren haben es nur mit grosser Vorsicht gebraucht." (Brunner" **GH.** p. 21). It is, however to be noticed, that **threskeia**, religion, occurs in James 1:26, 27; and **eusebeia**, piety, godliness, quite frequently: Acts 3:12; 1 Tim. 2:2, 10; 4:7; 6:3, 11; 2 Peter 1:3,6, etc.

There is an important underlying truth in Barth's emphasis on the difference between the human and the divine sides in the life of Christ. But does he not come near making *two persons* of the *one* person, the Logos, who became flesh?

2. The Death And The Resurrection Of Christ Not Strictly Historical

This dualism (whether of person or function) runs uniformly through Barth's whole theory of Jesus Christ, even in the matter of cross and resurrection. What is the death of Christ according to Barth? A voluntary self-surrender and atonement of the second person of the Godhead for the sin of the world? Not exactly. A message of God to man, indeed the final message; the fundamental negation; the judgment on all human possibility, especially the religious; in short the prophet, the wonder-worker, dies that the Son of God may live (*Rbr.* pp. 176, 217, etc.). God is revealed as God, as sovereign Lord

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[3] Was his "outward history obscure," who twice cleansed the temple, made water into wine, healed a paralytic, stilled the tempest, walked on the water, healed a man born blind, cleansed lepers, raised the dead, voluntarily died on the cross and rose the third day? Has Barth possibly underestimated the perfect poise and balance in the character of Jesus; his strength combined with innocence and humility; love with earnestness; wisdom with courage; dignity without pride; devotion to God with interest in man; neither a pietist nor mystic, neither ascetic nor enthusiast, but the world's most positive character? Has Barth forgotten the seven Words on the Cross?

(Acts 4:24). "The death of Christ, says Barth, is the negation of the relativity of all that is of this world, the radical dissolution of all human values and thereby the vindication of God as the first and the last, for the end of man is at the same time the beginning of God" (*Strauch,* p. 28).

As seen above, Barth does indeed say that "in the sacrifice of Christ, the sacrifice required of us has been made once for all," but this after all occupies a relatively subordinate place in the pre-temporal, supralapsarian scheme championed by Barth.

Like his life and death, the resurrection of Christ is super-temporal. If it had taken place in the sphere of the physical and historical it would be a subject of doubt and debate along the lines of ordinary epistemological and historical rules. Questions would and did arise, whether there was a real resurrection, whether his body was changed into an etherial, sublimated state, or whether his "appearances" were not subjective or objective visions of the disciples. In short, if the resurrection be regarded as historical in the ordinary sense, it would be open to the doubts attached to all history. Barth, therefore, with no little acumen, conceiving all spiritual events, especially revelation as taking place in a non-temporal, non-spatial world, invisible to mortal eye, but all the more real, logically brings the resurrection under the fundamental thesis of invisibility. He serves notice on scientists, idealists, pragmatists and the whole brood of humanists: 'Stop, ye finite, mortal, materialistic creatures, ye cannot enter here; this is a supernatural, transcendent, transcendental world of which ye can know nothing—unless perchance ye have been touched by the Spirit of God.'[4]

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[4] Barth continues: "There is no continuity, no recognizable connection between the gospel narratives and the resurrection itself. That which is

3. *No Real History Of The Incarnation*

There are several reasons, according to Barth, why that which in Scripture is represented as history must be viewed with suspicion. First, the uncertainty of the text and of authorship, questions which Barth declines to discuss, preferring "to have done with a battle that once had its time but now has *had* it." We are told that it matters little whether Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses were historical figures, or "products of later myth-making." Per Contra, as says Sayce, every great religion must of necessity have sacred books as a norm and standard of its teaching.

Second, the inherent incapacity of man to record in adequate language the revelations and acts of God. We have at best only *"the special content* of this *human document"* (*WGuT.* p. 61). Ordinary human history has a series of affirmations and denials. "Biblical religious history has the distinction of being in its essence, in its inmost character, neither religion nor history...Biblical history in the Old and New Testament *is not history at all,* but seen from above is a series of free divine acts and seen from below a series of fruitless attempts to undertake something in itself impossible....It is this that I call the Bible's other-worldliness, its unhistoricalness [Transcendence?] its antipathy to the idea of sacredness. God is the new, incomparable, unattainable, not only heavenly, but more than heavenly [what is that?] interest" (*WGuT.* pp. 66, 72, 73).

If such be the character of Old and New Testament history how can there be a basis of fact for any "revelation"

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related in the gospels in a riddle like way about the resurrection of Christ is clearly and fundamentally nothing else than a manifestation of the Kingdom of God (**eine auf das Endgiltige hinweisende Erscheinung und Erkenntnis des Reiches Gottes, das Gott eigen, nicht menschliches Eigenleben ist, das dem Bann des Todes entronnen ist, Auferstehungsleben"**) (Vom christlichen Leben, p. 33).

whatever? Must we hold that as history it has less value than the ancient Babylonian and Assyrian annals?

4. *The Biblical Life Of Jesus*

The four evangelists, says Barth, describe the life of Jesus as a history which rapidly and dramatically moves toward his passion and death. It is the Servant, indeed the Suffering Servant of Isaiah who is disclosed in Jesus (Acts 8:26). Jesus as the crucified interested Paul; as the sacrifice of the new covenant between God and man he interests the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Dog. I, p. 175. The life of Jesus according to the New Testament is an act of obedience unto death, "even the death of the cross." Wherefore God exalted him and gave him a name that is above every name.

The Logos is God. "No *almost* God can reveal the Father. *Finitum non capax infiniti.* This one accredited sentence destroys at one stroke all trinitarian heresies... Accordingly revelation takes place in spite of our hostility to God, and of our self-complacency...Revelation means atonement...It is not revelation and atonement which authenticates the Son; the Son authenticates revelation and atonement" (*Dog.* I, pp. 188, 189, 191).[5]

Having shown that the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan creed must be accepted (193–4), he concludes: "On the perfect deity of Christ hinges the complete efficacy of the atonement effected by him, and on this in turn the *sola*

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[5] "God alone is the revealer, but he does not reveal himself apart from the creature, though only in such a manner that he alone is the revealer, the Lord....Scripture is God's word in virtue of its being grounded in God's revelation. But God's revelation is God's word without being grounded in another. It is God's message grounded in itself [transcendental]. It cannot be separated from God's message and plan. **It is Dei Loquentis persona.** Revelation grounds Scripture as sacred and the churchly sermon as churchly, and both as Word of God" (**Dog. I,** pp. 177, 131).

fide, concerning which one ought not to allow himself to be deceived" (197).

5. The Holy Spirit In Revelation

While Christ is the organ of external revelation, the Holy Spirit is the organ of internal revelation, 1 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 2:28; etc. Barth comes, therefore, to consider the function of the Spirit in revelation. In the first part of the Dogmatik he devotes nearly ninety pages (126–214) to the doctrine of the trinity as fundamental in theology and revelation. No trinity, no revelation; no Holy Spirit, no internal revelation. God, as in himself Spirit, absolute Spirit (not a Spirit) is revealed in the Holy Spirit—a truth running through all Scripture.[6]

In this connection, Barth again argues for an extraordinary, a transcendent factor in revelation and in the faith of the disciples in the risen Christ. "Does not this faith transcend every known organ, every known function of human consciousness, every possibility of such an organ or such a function? If, however, there be a possibility of God speaking, is there not a possibility of man hearing? Can one in spirit in confirmation of faith within man—quite independent of the assurance of the New Testament—adduce anything else than the X of a possibility in and from God, which stands upon the same plane in the most intimate relation with the New Testament Father and Son? This 'anointing' and 'sealing' (1 John 2:20, 27; Eph. 1:13) of the Holy One which is presupposed in faith, cannot be the same as the 'anointed' and 'sealed' creature" (*Dog. I,* p. 205). In short, the Holy Spirit mediates grace and revelation.

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[6] If man has capacity to receive the Holy Spirit, has he not also capacity to receive a revelation and even in a manner to understand Christ? Man may become a temple of God. Barth's reference to the passage of the sin against the Holy Spirit rebounds upon himself with terrific force.

6. The Objective Possibility Of Revelation

Barth's section on the possibility and necessity of the incarnation is a remarkably acute and penetrating piece of dialectic reasoning, one of the most satisfactory in the Dogmatics. The threads of Scripture on the nature of the persons of the Godhead, their several offices and the person of the Holy Spirit, are gathered together with the view of coming at once to the ground of a revelation at all.

The burden of Barth's plea is that despite a revelation, God is God first and last, that even as "revealed," he is the *unknown* God, the *hidden* God, though Barth would not have this understood in the Kantian sense, that the *Ding-an-sich,* the Object-in-itself, cannot be known. Some might ask whether there is an essential difference between these views? "God is God. For the basic proof of this by no means self-evident fact, upon which all theology rests, the doctrine of the trinity suffices. In the doctrine of the Father and much more in that of the Spirit, one cannot rest with a one-sided emphasis on the so-called transcendence of God. That which gives us concern is that according to the doctrine of the trinity, i.e., according to the necessary theology of revelation, God, whether transcendent or immanent, remains God in revelation" (215).

7. Revelation Grounded In The Trinity, The Trinity In Revelation, A Paradox, Or A Petitio Principii

According to Barth the doctrine that God is God is based on "the doctrine of the trinity," and so God, "whether transcendent or immanent" remains God in revelation. Barth accordingly in the PROLEGOMENA devotes a long section (pp. 125–214) to a learned and acute philosophic discussion of the trinity as basic in theology. His method is unusual, only a few theologians having started with the trinity (Lombard, Bonaventura, Marheineke). We are not concerned here with the legitimacy of Barth's method except to note that if revelation is made to depend on the doctrine of the trinity, it is illicit to make revelation (the Word of God) the source of the doctrine of the trinity, as Barth seems to do.

Barth writes: "The Christian sermon is God's word in virtue of its confirmation in God's revelation. But God's revelation is God's word without confirmation in something else. It is grounded in God. It is *Dei loquentis persona.* God's word is God in his revelation. Scripture is grounded in revelation" (*Dog.* I, p. 131).

We understand Barth to mean, that in a primal revelation, invisible and unrecordable in human language, but of which a dim transcript is preserved in the Bible, God was pleased from the Yonside, transcendentally, to reveal his will and at the same time to remain hidden. As in the Godhead there are three persons (according to Scripture) the three must have been revealed concurrently.

8. The Word Became Flesh

The Logos, Word, assumed our humanity. This is the other side of revelation. Barth refers to Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo?* and the Heidelberg Catechism (Ans. 12–17) as teaching that the mediator must be "a true and sinless man and one who is at the same time true God." The metaphysical problem how the one person Jesus Christ can be both God and man at the same time Barth does not attempt to solve (referring only casually to Phil. 2:5) except so far as to reconcile his theory of the unknowableness of God with the actual revelation in Christ, who was God.

Barth ventures to suggest that Jesus, seen and heard by men and tarrying among them, might indirectly reveal God in a manner not unlike the revelation to Moses, "Thou shalt see my back; but my face shall not be seen," Exodus 33:23. "Under this objective condition revelation would be possible. Observe: Possible. Such veiling of God in the flesh *could* render God's revelation visible" (225). In this case God would illumine in his hiddenness.

9. *The Subjective Possibility Of Revelation*

But how can man receive a revelation? How can the outpouring of the Spirit be mediated? It is a question of human receptivity corresponding to the divine spontaneity, without which the idea of revelation would not be complete. How could we say anything decisive without reference to the grace imparted through the Holy Spirit? How can man without ceasing to be man become a receiver of revelation? How shall he receive and meet God? Without an answer to this question, the idea of revelation, despite proof of its objective possibility would obviously be unrealizable. Calvin formulated the problem in his *Institutes*, III, 1 and 2, 54. "Of what avail is it that the sun shines, if we are blind," asks Barth (285–6). He answers: "The foreignness of God *(Gottesfremde)* in which man is what he is, signifies that he has no desire, receptiveness or capacity *(Aufnahmefähigkeit)* for the Word of God" (286).

Then follows the remarkable statement: "There is—and this it is which modernistic theology has so signally failed to see—no human organ for revelation. What power of human consciousness could enter into consideration as the way to this goal, the bridge over the abyss, the bearer of the movement in question?...and now we find that the man to whom God reveals himself is the man to whom God cannot be revealed...He lacks every quality. *Jede Qualität dazu geht ihm ab.*" (287)[7]

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[7] Barth constantly affirms that there is no "human organ" of revelation. If he means that man has no physical organ in the sense that he has an organ to secrete bile, he is on safe ground. But Barth raises a false

Barth seems to have overlooked that he asked, Of what avail is the sun if we have not eyes to see? Barth does not answer his own question, but plumply denies that we have *"capacity"* for revelation. We would hold that there is a correspondence between our inner and the outer world (realistic-idealism, or idealistic-realism, or however one may phrase it, and that without either mysticism or pantheism). God has so endowed us that by whatever gift, or power, or faculty it may be designated, man has the "very receptivity" which Barth calls in question. Even, as finite, man seeks the light (as does the plant).

10. The Holy Spirit In Revelation

In the end Barth seems to allow that man has some sort of receptivity. "The man who cannot stand before God is the man who can in truth stand before him...This is possible under the supposition that man has the power to step outside himself [is not this mysticism?] to live in God and so from the side of God with eyes opened by God, in his light and through *revelation recognize revelation*" (288). At bottom, however, except under certain conditions the revelation is purely objective.[8]

After reaching the above conclusion Barth devotes ten more pages to man as weak, and since *finitum non capax infiniti,* he is embarrassed to bring this into accord with his doctrine that the Holy Spirit mediates revelation.

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issue and befogs the subject by denying the possibility of revelation unless man has a "special organ." Man acts as a unit, a self, an Ego in religion as in everything else. Barth may no more demand a special "organ" for revelation than we may demand of him to explain his "organ" of thought.

[8] That such is his meaning is clear: "wenn es ein solches durch Gottes Willen und verwirkliches In-Gott-Sein des Menschen gäbe, ein In-Gott-Sein des Menschen gerade in der Betätigung seiner Menschlichkeit, dann würde offenbar der Mensch, wie er ist, also in seinem Widerspruch vor Gott zunichte werden, vor Gott stehen, Gott durch Gott gefunden haben, Gott in Gott erkennen, in Gott vor Gott möglich sein als Empfänger seines Wortes" (289).

How can the Holy Spirit mediate revelation if man has no capacity for the infinite? Then, too, the sceptic asks, How do we know that there is a Holy Spirit? Do we not assume that there is a God, and that he reveals himself through the Holy Spirit, that Scripture so represents, that through faith we are so assured, etc.? Is not this whole procedure an arguing in a circle from first to last? And especially so since faith, according to Barth, is "*Hohlraum,* a vacuum? Does not everything take place in a sphere absolutely beyond man, a transcendental region where all cows are black?

CHAPTER X

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FAITH

A. THE HOLY SPIRIT

It is to the credit of Barth that he regards the doctrine of the trinity as fundamental and developes it through some forty pages in the first part of the Dogmatik. He cites questions and answers of the Heidelberg Catechism: "Since there is but one divine essence why speakest thou of Father, Son and Spirit? Because God has revealed himself in his word that these three distinct persons are the only true and eternal God." He follows substantially the Athanasian creed. He allows that the term *Person* does not occur expressly in Scripture, but its equivalent is found in Hebrews 1:3, "the express image of his person."

1. Man Not An Automaton, But Active-Receptive In Revelation

Man is a unit, but acts with three kinds of endowment, reason, will and feeling. When we say that a certain man is all intellect, will or emotion we simply mean that this or that quality or disposition predominates. The ancients regarded the heart as the seat of the affections, but this was figurative. When a man is under the influence of the Holy Spirit, believes in Christ, is converted, he is active in greater or less degree intellectually, emotionally and volitionally; he is not an automaton, robot, or wooden-man; he is active-receptive.

Faith without knowledge is superstition. Though it was once held that the prophets were like a musical instrument, upon which the Holy Spirit played, such view has yielded to that of regarding the prophets as speaking under the guidance of the Spirit.[1]

The inability of human thought to grasp and of human language to express the mysterious relation of the Holy Spirit to the other persons of the trinity leads the average man to conclude that Christianity is too vague, irrational and transcendental to be accepted either in theory or practice. If told that it is a matter of faith he may reply with Feuerbach that faith is merely imagination, or with Barth that it is a vacuum, emptiness. Notwithstanding such objections, the reality, office and function of the Holy Spirit are well attested in Scripture.

That the Holy Spirit is unknown to science and cannot be comprehended by reason *(rationalism)* is only another proof that science moves on the plane of the natural and Christianity on that of the supernatural and so are irreconcilable. Unless the thesis be accepted that the Holy Spirit is a person of the Godhead, whose advent in power was the earthly culmination of the mediatorial work of Christ, Christianity occupies no higher plane than the best of the ethnic religions.

Barth warns against reading a false meaning into the words "first," "second," "third," as if there were degrees *(Stufenordnung)* in the Godhead. The terms, Father, Son, Spirit are better. And something can be said in favor of *principium, sapientia, virtus.*

2. The Great I AM And The Trinity

Barth finds safe footing for the doctrine of the trinity in the manifestations of Jehovah to Moses in Ex. 3:2–22, and agrees with Scheel that "the history of the doctrine of the trinity is substantially a history of the doctrine of the Logos-idea," around which redemption revolves. What takes place on Horeb? A mysterious personage appears to Moses and says: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob... And Jehovah said: I have surely seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt and am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, etc." Then comes the marvellous message: "God said unto Moses I AM THAT I AM: and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you...Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you."

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[1] Dr. Shedd points to the fact that "Inasmuch as the meaning of the term person was more difficult to reach and state, than the meaning of the term Essence, more imperfection and indefiniteness appear in the terminology employed. The threefoldness is more difficult to grasp than the unity" (Hist. Ch. Doct. I, p. 364).

This name and this covenant, says Barth is the theme of the Old Testament witness. It is also the theme of the New Testament witness, namely, the reality of one whom a circle of other witnesses, who speak in the New Testament (John 3:14, "I, the Lord and the teacher," and John 20:28, "My Lord and my God"), cannot avoid mentioning. These are far-reaching truths (*Dogm.* I, p. 152).[2]

This personage, the Church calls the Logos, witnessed by prophets and apostles, the Word of God, who has come to men, the eternal Wisdom, as says Calvin, who spoke to men of Himself (p. 152).[3]

3. The Metaphysical And The Dynamical In The Holy Spirit

Barth does not discuss the metaphysical side of the problem of the Holy Spirit as much as the dynamical. He proves, however, that the third person of the Godhead is co-equal with the Father and the Son. If the New Testament be taken as authoritative it is clear that deity must be ascribed to him. The Comforter whom the Son sends is other than the Father and the Son. Paul ascribes to the Holy Spirit the attributes of personality, self-consciousness and freedom, 1 Cor. 2:10, and warns against grieving the Holy Spirit, Eph. 4:30. That must be a personal power which in the regeneration calls forth in the sinner the highest spiritual life. Divine homage is rendered to him in the baptismal commission, Matt. 28:19, and in the Apostolic benediction, 2 Cor. 13:14.

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[2] Here Barth accepts the historicity of both the Old and New Testament narratives—a strange, if not irreconcilable departure from his view in general that Biblical history is not better than secular history.

[3] Barth proceeds: "The Logos, the name, the man, the Logos of God, he whose name is the I AM: "Die Offenbarung Gottes, die doch nicht irgendwie weniger ist als ganz Gott selber, der ganze Gott, der eingeborene Sohn Gottes."

4. The Spirit Of God Reveals God (transcendentally)

A great truth too often neglected is expressed by Paul: "But unto us God revealed them [the unseen things] through the Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. 2:10–11. From this it may be inferred that the Holy Spirit (immanently) stands related to the Godhead somewhat as the spirit of man. Man is a soul, but has spirit, the quality by which he is distinguished from other men.

The fulness of the divine life, manifested in the Son, is committed to the believer, not by a physical manifestation, but through an invisible, dynamic, transcendental mediation, unknown to man but intensely real. This manifestation is a quickening energy, proceeding from God, even as man's breathing continually proceeds from him. This procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son is manifestly different from the eternal generation of the Son. The high office of the Holy Spirit is thus clearly evident. The plan of salvation comes from the

Father (if we may logically distinguish between things that are synchronistic) and is executed by the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit.

5. The Holy Spirit, The Sanctifier

From the position won regarding the Logos, Barth proceeds to establish the doctrine of the Holy Spirit by proof from the New Testament. "No man can come unto me, except the Father that sent me draw him," John 6:44; "Except one be born of water and the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John 3:5; "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit," 1 Cor. 12:3; "In whom [Christ] having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise," Eph. 1:13; the climax is reached in the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:4, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."

One who reads the New Testament carefully will see everywhere, says Barth, the presence and Power of the Spirit, who creates faith in the believer. In fact does not faith TRANSCEND every known organ, every known function of the human consciousness, and every possibility of such organ? Barth never wearies of affirming that there is no "organ" of faith or of other religious activities. Neither is there an organ of the intellect, will, or feeling as there is of speech or sight. This does not disprove that man as a self-conscious, responsible agent has the capacity to exercise faith or receive a revelation. If faith be merely "the X of a Possibility" could men become the heroes of the eleventh of Hebrews?[4]

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[4] "Sieht er [der Historiker] aber ein, dass hier an Gott geglaubt wurde, wo, aus welcher Religions-psychologie nimmt er die Voraussetzungen für diesen Glauben her? Transzendendiert dieser Glaube nicht jedes bekannte Organ, jede **bekannte Funktion** des menschlichen Bewusstseins, jede Möglichkeit eines solchen Organs oder einer solchen Funktion? Kann man

(1) *His Personality*

It has been suggested that the Holy Spirit is merely an influence or power, and not a person. But the uniform teaching of Scripture is that the Holy Spirit is a person in every sense of the word. Personality includes intelligence, will and individual subsistence. The use of the pronouns I, Thou, He, in relation to the Holy Spirit is a clear proof that he is a person. "The Holy Spirit said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" Acts 13:2. "The Comforter. . .whom I will send unto you," John 15:26.

(2) *His Office*

The office of the Holy Spirit in the work of redemption is of the most exalted character. To the Virgin it was said: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God," Luke 1:35. The prophet Isaiah foretold that the Messiah should be endowed with all spiritual gifts: "Behold my servant whom I have chosen; my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him," Matt. 12:18. The Spirit is the revealer of divine truth, the doctrines of the Bible being things of the Spirit. What Micah says is true of all the prophets: "Truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord," 3:18. What David said the Holy Spirit is declared to have said. Paul did not receive his doctrine from men, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," 1 Cor. 2:10. If, therefore, the Holy Spirit is the author and revealer of truth, as appears from the constant and uniform

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denn zur Begründung der **Pistis** im Menschen etwas Anderes anführen als das X einer Möglichkeit in und aus Gott, die mit den vom Neuen Testament als Vater und als Sohn Bezeichneten in einer Linie, auf einer Ebene, in bestimmtesten Zusammenhang steht ohne doch darum mit ihnen identisch zu sein"? (p. 204.)

representation of Scripture, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the greater half of the Bible, if not all, is to be referred to the Holy Spirit as the real author.

B. FAITH

1. Definitions In Reformation Catechisms

In viewing faith as the channel through which the grace of God in Christ is mediated, Dr. Barth follows, in the main, the Reformation confessions, but with his usual peculiarities of thought and expression. The Lutheran definition in Article IV, of the Augsburg Confession runs: "They [the Lutheran churches] teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own powers, merits or works; but are justified freely of grace for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by his death hath satisfied for our sins. This faith doth God impute for righteousness before him, Rom. III and IV." According to the Heidelberg Catechism (Reformed); "True faith is not only a certain knowledge whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in his word, but also an assured confidence which the Holy Ghost works by the Gospel in my heart: that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting righteousness and salvation are freely given by God, merely of grace for the sake of Christ's merits," (Answer 21).

2. Faith In The Barthian System

Barth's definitions and descriptions of faith are phrased in metaphysical and dialectical rather than in Biblical terms. "Faith is ever the same boldness (Trotzdem), the same unheard of thing, the same venture of ventures. . . . It is for all, the same leap into emptiness *(ins Leere)*. It is possible for all, because it is equally impossible for all" (*Rbr.* p. 74). "The paradox of faith can never be given up. Only through faith does man stand before God. In so far as man's faith is a human attitude, disposition and tendency, it is as little divine as human righteousness. In so far as it is emptiness, limitation, which includes miracle, the impossible, the paradox, it is... accepted by God as divine righteousness...Faith, Abraham's faith, all faith, takes place, not in time, but in eternity....Faith is neither religious, nor irreligious, neither sacred nor profane, and yet always both" (pp. 97, 102, 104).

"Faith, in so far as in any sense it professes to be more than emptiness *(Hohlraum)* is un-faith...It is the *hybris (insolence)* which ignores the distance between God and man and would place the No-God on the throne" (33).

"Faith seems without self-worth, even without the self-worth of self-denial, without personal strength, even without the personal worth of humility....It is never finished, never assured *(Gesichert);* it is, psychologically viewed, always and ever, anew a leap into the uncertain, into the dark, into the empty air *(leere Luft).* To the miracle of revelation corresponds the miracle of *faith.* God in *consciousness,* in this aspect also, is God in history, no mere imaginative idea but a new compulsion from above" (*WGuT*. p. 44, tr. 289).

(1) *Faith And Obedience*

"Faith and obedience indicate a relation of man to God, not direct and immediate, but one conditioned by the Holy Spirit in the word and Jesus Christ....In faith and obedience man recognizes the word of God hidden in history, accepts it and yields to it. In faith and obedience he enters the continuity of primitive history, becomes and is a member of the Church....In faith and obedience man is a possession, not of deity in general, but of Jesus Christ, reconciled with God in him and no longer his own, as says the Heidelberg Catechism" (*Dogm.* I, p. 320).

In his discussion of faith in the Dogmatics, Barth has an eye on Schleiermacher, from whom he dissents fundamentally. "Faith implies a knowing and obedience. One has not the courage thereto as long as one imagines *(Schleiermacher)* that it is merely descriptive of a natural, innate relationship to God. The real man is the knowing, willing man; the man apparently moved by feeling is not the actual, but the observed man. I perform acts knowingly, and only so can I be held accountable. If there be a relationship between God and man, it must be an active, intelligent relationship.... Weak and inadequate are the knowing and doing of man through which he receives the revelation in which he accepts God. But this is precisely the miracle of the Holy Spirit that God accepts the inadequate act of man as done in Him" *(als in Gott getan anerkennt,* p. 329).

"Luther's *Sola fide* is true, but only so far as it remains subordinate to the *Soli Deo gloria* and in so far as it signifies *solitaria fide,* to the extent that justifying grace by virtue of the same grace has alongside of it sanctifying obedience."

"God works within us. This is a fact. But this fact has three dimensions. The first, that it is God who works in us, is basic; two derived and subordinate ones, namely, that God *works,* and that he works *in us.* This is the miracle of the Holy Spirit, that our knowledge becomes faith, our doing becomes obedience, that while he accepts the word of God not merely once but always, daily, hourly, is led this way, now in this, now in that direction, but always along the way between the question and the answer, the answer and the question, both of which are the work of eternal favor toward us, etc." (pp. 327–8–9).

(2) *Faith And Trust*

"The Reformers thought it important to characterize faith as *fiducia,* trust. Naturally it is materially a knowing, an acknowledgment, my Yes to God's word spoken to me, knowledge and assent, that is, it is an act in which I participate so that it becomes in my own thinking, a very peculiar but highly energetic disposition. In believing I know of God, that he is my God and that I am his. The primary reality of faith is with Calvin unquestionably the *unio cum Christo* associated with faith, the divine lordship, through which the eternal Word takes possession of us. Herein Luther and Calvin agree" (pp. 329, 330).

Barth continues: "In faith we have to do with revelation in concealment, in the divine expressed once for all in the incarnation of the Word. Thus we become children of God. The knowing of faith is higher than all reason, surpasses all thinking, which we can follow only in the capitulation of our reason. The antithesis of heart and head, the emphasis on the fiducial character of faith, may indicate the nature of the knowing....The super-rational *(Das Irrationale)* in man in his relative antithesis to the rational is a helpful reminder of the absolute antithesis, that, as over against revelation it is only a question to accept God, whom we cannot comprehend, after that we have been gripped by God....Not as if the super-rational were the seat of immanence in man, not as if the heart were less in need of conversion than the head, though it be doubtless true that in the begripping the heart is somewhat quicker than the head" (pp. 330–332). See Chapter XIV, for explanation of *Das Irrationale* and *Der Irrationalismus.*

3. *The Relation Of Faith To Knowledge*

(1) *Is Faith Defiance?*

Faith, according to Barth, is the medium through which divine realities are communicated, and yet faith is a "vacuum," emptiness. How then can Barth get a safe footing anywhere? Is there not a confusion of thought here? Has Barth a clear idea of the relation of faith and knowledge? He nowhere announces any well-defined epistemological or metaphysical principles. The endless iteration of the dialectical Either-Or, Yes and No, eternity versus time, God versus man, ends as it begins without proof.

The sixteenth century Reformers held uniformly that "Faith is a certain knowledge, *certa notitia, etc.*" Heid. Catechism, 21. Barth plumply ignoring this, says that "faith is a radical defiance *(radikales Trotzdem).*" Faith is not defiance, it is trust; nor is it a blind leap; it is unbelief that is blind. Tennyson erred in writing; "We have but faith; we cannot know: for knowledge is of things we see." Such a view limits knowledge to the senses, a palpable absurdity. Faith is knowledge of supersensible realities.

(2) *Scientific Belief And Christian Faith*

Scientific belief and Christian faith begin with certain fundamental, self-evident truths, back of which we cannot go and which the human mind accepts as ultimates, shining in their own light. The scientist starts with a dozen or more truths of a strictly metaphysical character, on the basis of which he proceeds to gather facts. Such are the concepts of self-hood, substance, force, life, purpose, which he accepts at their face value but cannot prove. In all thinking and reasoning there must be something agreed upon; something unchallenged as true, or there would be an interminable regression; there could be no start; all would be provisional. We begin, not with things observed in the external world, but with recognizable truths in the internal world. These ultimates cannot be defined, for to define seems to limit, to bring under a higher head. I know before consulting the dictionary that a cat is "a domesticated quadruped" and a dog "a carnivorous mammal," but it is silent on what I want to know, namely, the quality of catness or dogness. Such terms as God, substance, life, faith, etc., are ultimates, and so can at most be described, not defined. An ultimate is a *summum genus,* and cannot be brought under another head. Faith is nowhere defined in Scripture, though there are many declarations as to its various qualities. Even the famous Hebrews 11:1, "Faith is the substance *(hypostasis)* of things hoped for, the evidence *(elenchos)* of things not seen," though profoundly descriptive, is not a definition in the sense which words are defined in the dictionary.

It follows that, though scientific belief and Christian faith start with self-evident truths and are to this extent analogous, they represent two distinct spheres. Scientific belief is based on certain metaphysical concepts accepted as true but beyond proof, because they are transcendental, that is they transcend our finite powers of analysis. Christian faith is also transcendental (here Barth is right) in the sense that it rests upon and grows out of the grace imparted by the Holy Spirit in regeneration, which, as Christ said, is like the wind: "Thou can'st not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth."

4. *Prof. E. Brunner On Faith*

According to Brunner the central thought of religion is faith, the link connecting time and eternity, but only through its transcendental character. It is not a possession, nor a state, but emptiness. "Faith has nothing to do with pious feeling or religious experience. Faith moves in the sphere of spirit. Psychic implies time and definite grades of intensity....Between faith and every other inner happening there is a deep chasm, an absolutely unbridgable chasm."

(1) *The Emptier Faith Is The Better*

In the introduction to the E. E. u. G. Brunner states that in the third part of the book the object is "to restore faith from the false modern meanings to its full transcendental rank *(zu seinem vollen transcendentalen Gewicht)*" p. 4.

"Faith is not a psychic experience, that as such can be described apart from its subject, as little as the impression of a seal can be understood apart from the seal. Its essential mark is the absence of everything psychic....It is in short simply an adjustment to God Alone....Faith is therefore purer the less is said about it, the emptier it is in itself *(je leerer er an sich ist)*....It is customary (since Ritschl) to identify faith and trust. This formula on account of its simplicity and intelligibility has apparently the support of Scripture and the Reformers. Despite this, it contains a fatal misunderstanding, which inevitably leads to moralistic platitude as the history of modernistic theology shows. If faith be thus construed it is nothing else than a special case of purely moral and humanistic trust" (*op. cit.* pp. 91, 92).

Over against this the Heidelberg Catechism says: *"Wahrer Glaube ist nicht allein eine gewisse Erkenntnis* (a certain knowledge)...*sondern auch ein herzliches Vertrauen*" (a hearty trust), Question 25. In place of this Brunner comes forward with such statements as: "The trust is not trust at all but merely a symbol of the transcendent act of God....Faith implies the planting of the foot on the Yonside, the abandonment of the human viewpoint, the complete depreciation of all human striving" (p. 93).

(2) *The Transcendentalism Of Faith*

Brunner everywhere enforces his view of the Yonside, pre-temporal, transcendental character of faith. "Faith is an objective illumination of the divine thought, the for-me-becoming of the Logos, the recognition of grace." For Barthians, and especially Brunner, knowledge and willing form no temporal, and no logical succession, but are within each other. Faith is inconsistently enough at once knowledge and decision. "Faith cannot be discovered historically. History is for it sham and confusion. It is one of the greatest misconceptions of the age to identify revelation-faith—especially the Christian—with historical interests....Not only is faith indifferent toward history; it stands in sharp conscious opposition to historical thought" (pp. 105, 107). This means that in the dialectic formulation of the relation of time and eternity (rigid dualism), there is history only in the sense of anti-miraculous "happening," which, though not so meant, is virtually the "mechanistic," or "closed universe" of science.

Unless the reader grasps the underlying thought in the preceding citations he will not see the revolutionary character of Barthianism. Faith has to do, not with the life and condition of man, but solely with truth. But since truth is eternal and has nothing to do with experience and history, it is in no sense immanent, but transcendental. Barthians fear that if they allowed any immanent capacity in man, even for knowing God or exercising faith, they would open the flood-gate to humanism and self-salvation. Hence burning all bridges behind them, they unflinchingly proclaim an unqualified transcendentalism. Without faith we are in time; with it we are in eternity. Brunner says plumptly: "The relation of spirit to time is ever a negative: dissolution... Unity is impossible in time" (pp. 103, 102).

Several questions arise here. First, what is the origin of this alleged, yonside, transcendental faith? Under the old view it was the gift of the Holy Spirit. This does not seem to be Brunner's approach. It obviously cannot arise in man, for nothing that man can originate is eternal truth. Man's distress through sin may indeed be the occasion, but not the source of faith. "The emptier faith is, the purer it is." But *das Leere* (emptiness) cannot be the cause of anything, much less of faith. No human postulate settles the question; Brunner concedes as much. "Every postulate that aims to be more than a cry of despair...is a secret return to immanent possibilities" (PuO. p. 13). Hence the yonside is not reached. The possibilities therefore rest on conjecture that the "emptiness" may be filled. Faith is, according to Brunner, not a possible conception, but a transcendent reality. To any one but a German philosopher this is utterly unintelligible.

Secondly, Faith according to Brunner, appears to be an arrow shot from the yonside, the transcendent and transcendental entering time. Though we have no "capacity" for God, or faith, "we are just as we are, at one with God, because he so wills. *("Wir sind, so wie wir sind, mit Gott geeint, weil Gott as so will").*[5]

Brunner's view of faith is but a dialectic development of the Cosmic Eschatological dualism running through all

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[5] This astounding statement is at the close of a lengthy paragraph of which the substance is: that in spite of the separation between God and man, which can be bridged by nothing, not even represented as bridged, least of all, experienced as bridged, despite the fact of no way from man to God, and no infinitesimal point in the soul, in which man is not far from God, in which man has not fallen away from God, in spite of the fact that there is no experience, not even the devoutest, which as human is also God-like, in spite of this we are at one with God, etc. (**MuW.** p.188).

Barthianism; the absolute difference between God and man; the difference between the Bible as the Word of men and the Bible as the Word of God; faith as a reality in eternity and faith as emptiness in time.

5. *The Rev. Dr. B. B. Warfield, On Faith*

In contrast with the preceding, attention may be directed to a brief description of faith by an eminent American theologian, Dr. B. B. Warfield: "The religion of Israel was a religion of faith. . . and this faith was the same radical self-commitment to God, not merely as the highest good of the holy soul, but the gracious Savior of the sinner, which meet us as the characteristic feature of the religion of the New Testament. . . . Its regulative principle is drawn from above, not from earth. . . . An *unwavering* trust in God's promises. . . This is the key to the whole treatment of faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews—its definition of the *assurance* of things hoped for, the *conviction* of things not seen; its illustration and enforcement by the example of the heroes of the faith in the past. . . . A *trustful reliance,* not on the promises, but on the Promiser. *(Hast., Dict. Bible,* I, pp. 631–37).

Intuition. As usually understood, intuition is direct or immediate perception or cognition of ideas or truths independently of a chain of reasoning, or immediate cognition, of an object as existent. Thus I know immediately that I exist; it is a deliverance of consciousness. By certain idealistic German philosophers, as Fichte, Schelling and others, the term is used to denote not merely a *conception,* but a *knowledge* of the Absolute. When Barth opposes the use of the term he has in mind doubtless this unusual (that is unusual from an American viewpoint) and extreme connotation.[6]

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[6] As to the question whether the word intuition, accurately renders Kant's Anschauung, it may be observed that in his Latin writings he

employs **intuitus** and in the German he not infrequently brackets **intuitus** after **Anschauungen.** Upon the whole the word intuition best reflects his meaning. When used in opposition to **Begriffe, Anschauung** probably is best rendered by **perception.** It may be added that **intellectual intuition,** denoting an immediate knowledge of the existence of God was employed by German Mystics to express their spiritual illumination.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHURCH

Here again the cosmic-eschatological dualism of the divine and the human, the perfect and the imperfect, the voice of God and the voice of man emerges in full force and dominates the inquiry. Of all the crises confronting Christianity, that of the Church is the most unfortunate and calamitous. Our author has much to say on the authority and the inefficiency of the Church. In *Rbr.* and *WGuT.*, he describes in lurid terms the weakness, worldliness, low ideals and false doctrines of the Church today. If the Church functioned properly, taught the pure Gospel, were composed of saints, not sinners and traitors, there would be no need of reform in doctrine and life. The lower the Church has sunken the greater the need of just such a program as Barth proposes. The Church's distress, is Barth's opportunity; and well does he improve it. Whether his panacea will cure remains to be seen.

A. THE CHURCH AS VIEWED BY BARTH IN ROEMERBRIEF

The situation demands some kind of a compromise between the extremes of fundamentalism and modernism. That "something is rotten in Denmark," Barth proceeds to show.

"Over against the gospel stands the Church as the embodiment of the final human possibility this side of the impossible possibility of God. Here the abyss yawns as nowhere else. Here the sickness of man in the sight of God breaks out [most virulently], for the Church is the place where this side of the abyss, which separates man from God, a revelation from eternity to time has taken place....The Church is the place where one knows and has all kinds of things about God and has nothing; where God from the unknown beginning and end is somehow forced into the known human center, where one need no longer think of death, and has at once love, faith and hope, is directly God's child and awaits the coming of the kingdom. The gospel is the AUFHEBUNG (dissolution) of the Church, the Church the dissolution of the gospel" (*Rbr.* pp. 316).[1]

The above expressions, "the impossible possibility of God," the "abyss between God and man," a "revelation from eternity to time," the "dissolution of the Church," are further illustrations of the time-eternity dualism pointed out in the preceding chapters.

The Church is split up into that of Esau and Jacob, in the former of which the miraculous does not occur; in the latter the miraculous occurs in order that "above the lies of men the truth of God may be seen. . . . The Church of Esau is at bottom the only possible and known church of Jerusalem, Rome, Wittenberg, Geneva and all other past and future sacred places; in it mistakes and perversions, reformations and separations take place. And the Church of Jacob is likewise fundamentally the impossible, unknown Church, without growth or decline, without name or place, in which God's free call, election is one and all, beginning and end. What remains for us other than to take the need of the Church, the Church of Esau, which alone we know and to plead with God, the God of Jacob? saying: 'I shall not leave thee unless Thou bless me.' "

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[1] "Was heisst verstehn? Gibt es überhaupt auch nur einen Verständigen in diesem Sinne? Verstehen wir denn gar nicht, dass es sich darum handelt, zu verstehn dass wir nicht verstehen? Dass eben das Volk, das kein Volk, dass das unverständige Volk ist—das Volk der Verständigen ist. . . . Bei jenem Atheismus der Kirche (soeben beschrieben), der sich, sobald sie unausweichbar vor der Entscheidung für oder gegen ihr eigenes Thema steht, als ihr eigentliches Wesen enthüllt?" (373–5). Can there be any hope or possibility, "die der Mensch, die die Kirche in tat hat and deren Versäumnis ihre schuld ist, sie ist ja eben die göttlich-unanschauliche Möglichkeit. . . Nur mit dem Unmöglichen selbst, nur mit Gott können wir jenes 'Unmöglich' begründen." (Rbr. p. 376.) (A paradox of paradoxes.)

In the course of his sharp arraignment of the Church Barth breaks out in one of those characteristically lengthy and involved sentences which both mar the form and obscure the thought. We reproduce it in the original as an index of his style. It contains upwards of 282 words.[2]

We leave this untranslated, but reproduce his brief statement of the Church: "The whole uncertainty of human nature and culture finds expression in the Church. In so far as from the viewpoint of human pragmatism, the gospel message of Christ is one thing and the human work of the Church another, the Church is unquestionably the place where the enmity of man toward God is apparent, where his indifference, his misunderstandings, his opposition exhibit their sublimest and also their näivest form, where the death-point between two worlds become visible, where, too, the greatest conceivable divine forces make no progress against fearful attacks" (*Rbr.* p. 403).

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[2] "Einige Symptome der Krankheit der Kirche müssen hier genannt sein —zum beständigen Ausweichen vor dem Bruch, Sprung, und Opfer—zum beständigen Seitwärtsschielen auf die Fürsten und auf das Volk, auf die Gebildeten und auf die Proletarier, auf die Jugend und auf die Bürger, auf die Zeitgenossen und Zuschauer (was sie wohl dazu sagen? damit anfangen? ob sie es wohl verstehen oder vielleicht gar missverstehen könnten?) —zu jener wahrhaft staunenerregenden Kunst, dem Göttlichen immer und überall eine historische und psychologische Seite abzugewinnen, interessante Parallelen, geistige Stammbäume, bemerkenswerte Abhängigkeiten und Differenzen festzustellen, sog. 'Typen' zu entdecken oder zu erfinden und mit dem allem jeden etwa scharfgeladenen Schuss sorgfältig wieder aus dem Rohre zu ziehen,—zu jener gummiballartigen Elastizität, die auch den stärkesten Schlag ins Gesicht mit bewundernden Bemerkungen über die religiöse Kraft solchen Schlages zu erwidern weiss,—zu jener entmutigend freundlichen, loyalen und korrekten Art, mit der sogar ein Elia oder Amos unschädlich zu machen wäre, wenn er heute 'Bote' sein sollte,—zu jener fabelhaften Schnellkraft, die jedes, aber auch jedes, auftauchende Fünklein der unmöglichen Möglichkeit in die mögliche Möglichkeit einer Bewegung, einer Schule, einer 'Linie' oder eines 'Kreises,' eines allerneuesten Geschreis und Getüs von Gottbegeisterten zu verwandeln und womöglich einen entsprechenden Verlag zu begründen weiss, dessen Name schon von Anmassung und sicherem Misslingen Zeugnis gibt,—zu jener Fixigkeit, mit der jeder, der auch nur ein bischen mehr zu merken scheint als einige andere, alsbald dadurch erledigt wird, dass man ihn zum Führer proklamiert,—zu jener Fähigkeit endlich, immer und immer wieder einen Schlupfwinkel zu entdecken, wo der Mensch keine Aufhebung mehr zu befürchten hat, wo er endlich und endlich neutral sein darf, nichts mehr hergeben muss, in 'Gewissheit' seiner eigenen Gerechtigkeit froh werden kann" (pp. 371–2).

Barth's final shot at the Church in the Römerbrief is: "The question ever recurs whether theology and the Church had not better liquidate, since they cannot summon the courage to be what they are? If, however, they are courageous enough not to liquidate, then with every discouraging recollection of the banality of all human activity, let it not be too great or too triumphant a banality" (*Rbr.* p. 515).

B. Barth's Representation of the Church in His Word of God

In his *Word of God,* Barth is less severe on the Church than in the *Römerbrief.* And yet the viewpoint is essentially the same, namely, the characteristic antithesis between the true and the false, the yonside, or the transcendental and the thisside, or humanistic Church. "Here is an ancient and venerable *institution,* capable of change and yet constant, ancient and usually modern as well (though it does not like either word), often and severely attacked from the outside and still more severely compromised from within, but possessed of an inexhaustible ability to live or at least to exist" (p. 104, tr.) "Here are *people,* only two or three, perhaps, as sometimes happens in this country, or perhaps even a few hundred, who, impelled by a strange instinct or will, stream toward this building, where they seek—what? Satisfaction of an old habit? But whence came this old habit? Entertainment and instruction? Very strange entertainment and instruction it is! Edification? So they say, but what is edification? Do they know? Do they really know at all why they are here?" (p. 105).

Barth is of the opinion that the people desire what they do not get, the word of God: "The serious meaning of the situation in our churches is that the people want to hear the *word,* that is, the answer to the question by which, whether they know it or not, they are actually animated, Is it true?" (p. 110). "Am I not at least partly right when I say that people, educated and uneducated alike, are simply *disappointed* in us, unspeakably disappointed? Have they been too often—perhaps for centuries—*put off?*" (p. 111).

The need of more efficient ministers: "We need today ministers who take their work *seriously;* but this seriousness must concern itself for the *inwardness* of the church and in no sense for the church itself. The ministers who are concerned for the church are no longer equal to the almost infinite seriousness of our present condition. We need ministers who are *efficient,* but not necessarily efficient in *business*" (p. 130).

"The event toward which this expectancy is directed from both sides is Christian preaching. And the man who stands, perhaps not at the center, but certainly in the foremost and most exposed position, is the Christian preacher, the minister" (p. 133).

"Would it not be better for us, instead of reading ministerial, theological, and similar periodicals, to take up Feuerbach, for example, and to read him without trying continually to escape his snares?" (p. 127).

Unfortunately Barth is not a writer who logically and systematically develops his theme, but who constantly injects matter only indirectly related to the subject in hand. God, man, religion, revelation, the church, the minister, the gospel, are touched upon, discussed, condemned (Barth never praises anything human) in the course of a few pages.

In one place, speaking favorably of Roman Catholicism, he writes: "Any kind of monkery may be more acceptable to God than thine own complacent Protestantism, thou fool."[3]

C. BARTH'S VIEW OF THE CHURCH IN THE PROLEGOMENA TO DOGMATICS

Since Vol. I, of the Dogmatik, the Prolegomena, is devoted to an exhaustive study of the Word of God, as contained in the Bible and the sermon, the Church as the official representative of God has a prominent place. As in the other two works he devotes a seemingly unnecessary space to the question whether the ministry really presents the word of God and reaches the conclusion that with many reservations we may at least venture to suppose such to be a fact.

"The concept Church and the concept proclamation represent the idea or the Christian sermon....The Church means really God, when it brings the sermon in relation to the word of God, not merely something divine, not a God, but the God, the one only God....The Church sermon is heard. It is history and it reflects history....It is a venture, based on a definite historical datum, the datum that constitutes the church, which functions in the sermon" (*Dogm.* pp. 37, 39).

Here again the antithesis of God and man, the Church as human, and yet as God speaking, men as sinners and yet saints, emerges and in fact underlies Barth's whole representation of the Church.

1. *The Authority of the Church*

This leads to the question of the nature and authority of the Church and the three different theories: the Roman Catholic, the old Protestant and the more liberal.

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[3] "Irgend eine Möncherei kann Gott heute noch wohlgefäller sein als dein zuversichtlicher Protestantism, du Narr."

According to the first of these, not synods, or Councils, but ultimately the Pope is the source of authority and the bearer of revelation. From the village priest to the Pope and thence to the apostles and Christ there is an unbroken line of a valid authority. According to the Council of Trent, *where the Church is there Christ is.* Over against this "is the protest of Protestantism. No, say we, the *ecclesia docens* is not the *vox loquentis Dei;* the Church is subordinate to the word of God...As says Calvin" (*Dogm.* I, p. 348).

The true Church, from its origin ever renewing itself as the true Church, which, as says the Berne Disputation, knows itself as born of the word of God, is one and the same, with this selfpositing *(Sichselbersetzen)* and self-affirmation *(Fürsichselberreden)*, with the known and recognized fact of this one ground, with the *autopistis* of the Bible as the Word of God. The Church does not validate the Bible, but the Bible validates the Church and thereby itself" (p. 354).

2. The Internal Testimony Of The Holy Spirit

Barth argues along the line of the Kantian dictum of a transcendental world, which the finite mind cannot enter on account of its finiteness, but which is (Barth) reached, cognized, apprehended by the eye of faith, just as the natural eye sees things in the physical world. Faith is the human power of perceiving spiritual realities, the *elenchos* "the clincher of things not seen" by the physical organ. This reality, formally analogous to the recognition of the so-called axioms of mathematics and logic, is the recognition of a self-evident fact. "Only that here the self-evidence is to be conceived as grounded, not in human reason, but exclusively in the reason of God, who himself urges recognition *(in der Vernunft des sich selbst Anerkennung Dringenden Gottes)*, so that through its recognition by man nothing can be taken from the venturesome character of faith, or the miraculous character of the revelation" (*Dogm.* I, p. 357).

Barth accordingly teaches, that after textual and literary-historical criticism and inquiry into the canon, have completed their respective tasks, and given us the Bible as we have it, there is back of and underneath all, the self-authenticating character of the Bible, mediated and vouchsafed through the Holy Spirit, which is the final court of appeal.

D. BARTH'S INADEQUATE REPRESENTATION OF THE CHURCH

Though Barth refers to the ascension, the promise of the Comforter, the founding of the Church and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, he dwells lightly on the real significance of Pentecost, possibly because his theory of the insignificance and unimportance of events in time does not harmonize with what according to accredited history took place on that momentous day. His theory of *onceness* breaks down at this point, for the crucifixion, ascension, descent of the Holy Spirit, were occurrences, which, though part of one eternal plan, are consecutive on the human plane.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by extraordinary inward and outward phenomena. The believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, received in short a baptism of the Spirit, which was followed by marvellous outward phenomena, as well attested as any event in ancient history. Unless Barth makes a stronger defence for the supernatural and transcendental in Christianity than he has offered us thus far, his ambitious theory of the Yonside, the unknowableness of God even in Christ and of the weakness and corruption of the Church, can by no possibility win the world to Christ. Barth's overdrawn view of onceness prevents him from doing justice to the significance of Pentecost for the Church, however viewed.

At the psychological moment, Barth fails to take advantage of an unusual opportunity. Instead of exaggerating the shortcomings of the existing Church, he might well have made more of its divine side, its heaven-originated character and ultimate victory. In fact Barth's arraignment of the Church is not only inconsistent, but in conflict with his theory of the absoluteness of God. If God be God, as Barth constantly affirms, either he cannot or will not deliver the Church. The former alternative is excluded; the later is inconceivable. How else than through the Church as guided by her head does Barth propose to meet the "Crisis" confronting mankind today? He has no answer. Of all the weak features of the "dialectic" and "paradoxical" theology, this is the worst."[4]

E. The Thisside And The Yonside Church

The true Church, originating in eternity, not in time, must be evaluated in terms of eternity. According to Barth the Church is necessarily to be conceived of as wholly transcendental to the present order. What takes place in this eon, were it quantitatively and qualitatively ever so excellent, is never the Kingdom of God, but always the tower of Babel (*Rbr.* p. 419). Hence the tragedy of all history, even Church history.

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[4] Barth indeed writes: "God directs his cause in the Church, and because it is his cause it cannot fail." This, however, is said in connection with the following: "Because God is God and because he ever manifests himself as God, it is he alone who chooses and rejects, kills and makes alive, wounds and heals." This is the Barthian paradox (riddle); God directs all events within and without the Church; and yet man, through lack of faith, is responsible for the inefficiency of the Church, even though faith be the gift of God. How can man be held responsible if his striving is nil and his faith emptiness?

Barth is unsparing in his criticism of the "existing" Church, but more unsparing still in his condemnation of sects and pietists. "Rather with the church in hell than with pietists of lower or higher rank in a heaven that does not exist" (*Rbr.* p. 323). Barth's terrific bombardment of the Church and religion is directed not so much against the divine-human institution as against pseudo-religion and worship, and against people "who steal the livery of heaven to *serve* the devil in." But as a man at the point of death, does not leave a poor hospital for another, it is best to remain in the Church.

Here, again, our author's double predestination serves him well. Since in the *ordo salutis* a Moses may become a Pharaoh, a Pharaoh a Moses, it matters little whether one is in or outside the Church. Those of the true, invisible Church will be saved in any event. Barth is consistent in holding that certain of the heathen, not having heard of the historical Christ, but having accepted him, if they had, will be saved. They were so foreordained. What then is the need of Foreign Missions? Scarcely any. Barth in several places speaks rather lightly of missions.

The Church, however, which is aware of its duty and its limitations, will be the place of genuine repentance, not a man-made, but a God-originated repentance. In such a Church the word of God will be supreme, authoritatively interpreting the cross and resurrection.[5]

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[5] A French theologian affirms that Barth's radical objectivism like that of the young Martin Luther leads to the impossibility of effecting a sociological betterment of the Church. (*Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses, publiée par la Faculté de Théologie protestante de Strasbourg,* 1923, I, 25). Rev. Alfred Funk writes: "Dass Barth die Fragwürdigkeit der sichtbaren Kirche so offenkundig an den Pranger stellt, beweist, dass er richtig gesehen hat, worauf es Gott bei seiner Kirche ankommt. Was ihm da Gott in seinem Wort gezeigt hat, konnte Barth nicht für sich behalten, es musste heraus gesagt werden" (Reformierte **Lehre und Wehre,** Aug. 1930, S. 128).

CHAPTER XII

REVELATION, HISTORY, ONCENESS (EINMALIGKEIT), AND THE SUPER-HISTORICAL

A. Revelation and History

1. The Incarnation Not An Historical Event

The Word became flesh and tabernacled among men, but it was "no historical event." What do Barth and Brunner mean by continually denying historic events in connection with the incarnation? How can Jesus Christ be said to have revealed God if nothing took place? Ah! there's the rub. Something, everything took place in eternity, but nothing in time or space. Revelation is neither idea, nor history. It is Onceness and that has no history. Brunner in defending Barth from the charge of inconsistency observes that the critics have not noticed that from the viewpoint of historical events revelation is subordinated to sequence and history, whereas, it is a category in and for itself, something once-for-all, and so not history.[1]

2. Not Scripture, But The Reformation Confessions The Point Of Departure

Brunner states definitely that his point of departure is not Scripture, but the Reformation confessions of faith. "As classic expression of faith, sacred Scripture is not, as would be supposed, the point of departure.... Therefore we choose as starting-point that expression of faith, which, itself outside the Bible, exhibits most positively the self-consciousness of the faith based on Scripture, namely the Reformation confession of faith" (*RPET*. p. 8). Brunner does not refer to any particular confession, neither to the *Sola fide* of Luther, nor the *Soli Deo gloria* of Calvin.

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[1] "Es ist weder Idee, noch Geschichte—gerade darum, weil es das entscheidende Geschehen ist—sondern das Einmalige, das als solches nicht Teil der Geschichte sein kann, sondern die Krisis und Erfüllung der Geschichte bedeutet" (M. p. 351).

It is difficult to reconcile this with Barth's position. Referring to the Reformation he writes: "We are accordingly, as stated above, led back to our point of departure. Immediate, absolute, and all-inclusive authority is reserved exclusively to Scripture as to the Word of God. *Exclusively;* only in this isolation is it in truth the authority, namely the medium of revelation, upon which all other authorities are based" (*Dogm*. I, p. 387).

Brunner proceeds: "The Reformation was a protest against that modification of the originally Christian revelation principle which is indissolubly bound up with the *onceness (Einmaligkeit),* with the *eph hapax* of the apostolic message. What took place in Christ according to apostolic testimony, took place once-for-all....Hence the doctrine of the formal norm, the Reformation Biblical principle: the Word of God in Scripture is identical with the word of God in the soul, or more briefly: Scripture and Spirit in their paradoxical, inconceivable identity" (*RPET*. p. 9). How can the Holy Spirit, Scripture and the Word of God in the soul of man be identical?

3. Christ The Only Mediator

According to Scripture and the Reformation standards, the incarnation of the second person of the Godhead was to the end that atonement might be made for sin. It was a voluntary act, not the result of evolution. Barth and Brunner in contending that Jesus Christ is the sole Mediator once-for-all are on solid ground. They are also justified in the rejection of the Roman Catholic dogma that angels, saints, priests, and the Virgin Mary are mediators. When Barth and Brunner oppose one form of immediacy they mean that neither through the native endowment of man nor the direct mediation of the priest can man receive the benefit of redemption. That is reserved to God alone.

Scripture attests that the incarnation and the atonement took place but once and that the sacrificial death was valid for all time. "The death that he died unto sin once-for-all *(eph hapax),* etc." (Romans 6:10). "Now once *(hapax)* at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin" (Heb. 9: 26). "Christ suffered for sin once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18).

4. *The Incarnation The Only Once-For-All*

Under cover of their theory of onceness *(Einmaligkeit),* supplemented by that of *mediacy* and *immediacy,* Barthians announce some excellent views regarding revelation, but at the same time weave into the text others on history, Scripture, time, eternity, faith and the Church, the correctness of which may be challenged. Our purpose in the immediately following pages is to present some of the outstanding features of this phase of Barthianism, not so much for purposes of criticism as to inform the reader of the recondite and profoundly metaphysical character of much of the "crisis" theology, and nowhere less intelligible than in this connection. We proceed.

That it is really something absolute which takes place, comes to expression in the Onceness. "There is in the world nothing really once for all except this incarnation. This event alone has no similarity with other events. It is absolute in itself. It is the incarnation of the Word, the coming of the Son of God, the atonement. The world need not be atoned for twice....It is a once-for-all, because it is a dividing line between history and eternity; therefore, at the same time, history and the dissolution of history in eternity" (*M*. p. 258).

According to Brunner: "That which is known, that which is continuous with my knowledge, is not revelation and not faith. Revelation is transcendent, it comes from the other side and can therefore not be bound up continuously with my knowledge. It breaks through my knowledge-connection. It cannot, therefore, be known as true, but only believed as such." It has, however, generally been held that faith without knowledge is *superstition*[2]

5. Revelation A Breaking Through Into Time

Time and eternity are not only ontologically distinct according to Barthianism, but in the divine economy represent two entirely different relations. Much depends upon discovering what Barthians mean by their doctrine of onceness, and what use they make of the conception. We are told bluntly: "Revelation is the utterly 'once-for-all,' hence the absolutely decisive. This is so fundamentally true that one could reverse the sentence and say that the once-for-all and the decisive thing is revelation. Only since Christ and through Christ have we both Onceness and decisiveness in the absolute sense" (Brunner).[3]

History recounts many things, but nothing final. The ultimate we do not find in history. "A world-historical epoch is characterized by stupendous, but not necessarily decisive events....Revelation, however, is the absolute Onceness and at the same time the eternal, the absolute factor....History as such has no goal or fulfilment, but only a striving thereto. The eternal as event, as revelation, has no historical extension" (*M*. p. 271. God comes to man, but only transcendentally, invisibly and incognito.

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[2] "Das Offenbarungswort aber ist transzendent, es kommt von der anderen Seite und kann darum nicht kontinuierlich mit meiner Erkenntnis verbunden werden. Es durchbricht meinen Erkenntniszusammenhang. Es kann darum auch nicht als wahr 'beurteilt', sondern nur als wahr geglaubt werden" (M. p. 193).

[3] "Die Offenbarung ist das schlechterdings Einmalige, darum das absolut Entscheidungsvolle. Sie ist dies so sehr, dasz man den Satz umkehren und sagen kann: das schlechterdings Einmalige und Entscheidungsvolle ist die Offenbarung. Erst seit Christus und durch Christus gibt es beides: Einmaligkeit und Entscheidung im absoluten Sinne....Der Schlüssel zum Verständnis der ungeheuer bedeutsamen Tatsache...liegt im Begriff der Einmaligkeit, der identisch ist mit dem der absolut ernsten Entscheidung" (p. 269).

6. Four Oncenesses (Einmaligkeiten)

At the end of hundreds of pages devoted to proof of the determining and underlying principle of onceness we are informed that there are four cases of onceness. *Montes pariunter, mus nascitur.* "Christian mythus is characterized by four things: Creation, fall, atonement, redemption. These are absolutely fundamental and form a unit. They are wholly invisible and are 'here' only in faith. These four points are of the 'same dimension'; they all pertain to the dividing line between time and eternity. Not only do these four points form an indissoluble unity; but each can have taken place only once....In the center of this Onceness stands the revelation in Jesus Christ" (p. 350). Thus, according to Brunner, there is no one Onceness, but at least four Oncenesses, *vier Einmaligkeiten,* (the reader will pardon the crude but necessary coinage). By the same token one might count up a half-dozen more Oncenesses.[4]

7. Revelation In Christ, In Prophets And Apostles

Can Barth's hypothesis of onceness be carried out absolutely? Was there ever revelation through others than Christ? As seen above he argues in support of both an objective and a subjective possibility of revelation. Barth ignores Calvin's question, "Of what use is the sun if we are blind?" We propose to inquire how the case stands in Scripture.

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[4] One might possibly cite others, as the institution of baptism, of the Lord's Supper, regeneration, the second coming of Christ.

(1) *Revelation In The New Testament*

The apostle Paul records revelations from God, "It came to me through *revelation* of Jesus Christ," Gal. 1:12. "And I went up by *revelation*," Gal. 2:2. "How that by *revelation* was made known unto me the mystery," Eph. 3:3. "Unto us God *revealed* them through the Spirit," 1 Cor. 2:10. Such revelations are explicitly said to have been through Christ or the Holy Spirit.

The Savior himself testifies that *revelations* were made to men. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; for flesh and blood hath not *revealed* it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven," Matt. 16:17. "And it had been *revealed* unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ," Luke 2:26. This confession of Peter that the Lord is Christ and the Savior's attestation constitute very strong proof that revelations were granted to men under exceptional conditions.

Unquestionably there are rare moments of spiritual exaltation when men are fit instruments of divine revelation. Such a moment came to the great apostle when at the gate of Damascus, "it pleased God . . . to reveal his Son in me," Gal. 1:16. A similar moment came to the apostle John on Patmos when "the *revelation* of Jesus Christ" came to him.[5]

(2) *Revelation In The Old Testament*

On various occasions in the Old Testament history God is represented as *revealing* himself to prophets and lawgivers. The Hebrew word *galah (he revealed)* is usually rendered in the Septuagint by *apokalupto;* frequently some such expression as God, or Jehovah "spake" is employed. The noun apokalupsis in the sense of a message from God does not occur in the canonical Old Testament, the idea being expressed by other locutions. In whatever way construed, God is said to have revealed himself. "And Jacob built there an altar and called the place El-bethel: because there God was *revealed* unto him," Gen. 35:7. "Jehovah *revealed* himself to Samuel a day before Saul came," Isaiah 33:14. "Then was the secret *revealed* unto Daniel in a vision of the night," Dan. 2:19.[6]

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[5] These and similar passages "show beyond doubt that the New Testament saints, and St. Paul in particular, were quite convinced that God at times reveals his secrets—his mysteries—to a devout and earnest spirit, and that this **revelation** is consciously recognized by the soul as distinct from the discovery of a divine purpose in life, or the assurance of divine guidance" (**Dict. Christ and Apos. p. 521**).

(3) *General And Special Revelation*

Barth in denying that man has capacity to receive *revelation* runs counter to a maxim almost universally accepted that all religions presuppose a revelation in some sense, however vague. There are prophecies in the Old Testament announcing the Messiah.[7]

That there were revelations in the Old Testament period is unquestionable. Had the heathen a revelation? Brunner writes: "There is no religion which does not in some way claim to be based on a divine revelation" (*M.* p. 3). But speculative philosophy also claims a self-revelation in the human spirit. Either religion is grounded in a divine revelation, or it is merely an imaginary product of the longing heart. The sentence, "God can be known only through God can come equally well from the mouth of a Christian, a neo-Platonic philosopher, a Parsee, or a Hindu." All religions have their oracles and theophanies. Are all true?

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[6] We have already seen that Barth regards the wonderful transaction recorded in the third of Exodus as a revelation of Jehovah to Moses, vs. 3, 15. We add: "And God spake all these words, etc., Exodus 20:1-17.

[7] Brunner writes: "The Old Testament prophet has what no one else has, or can have, unless he is a chosen prophet. He has the divine word of revelation, which only is the truth of revelation....Because he alone has this message—not in virtue of what he is in himself, but, because he is the chosen mouthpiece of God—does he stand between God and man as a new fact, yea, as a new category over against every inner-human, inner-historical naturalism. He is the mediator of the divine truth of revelation. He is the organ through whom God makes his word heard in the world....The prophet is mediator between God and man" (M. p. 195).

In the first twenty pages of the *Mittler* Brunner gives an excellent summary of the subject of general and special revelation, with most of which we find ourselves in accord. Fundamentally there is only one religion; that which distinguishes religions is special modification of that which is essential. In the ethnic religions, special revelations are alleged to occur; in religious idealism the revelation is within the soul, and no outward revelation is necessary, even if that were possible. In the former systems are many revelations, in the latter only one, in which fact does *not occur,* but *is;* in the former a special revelation, in the latter, a general.

Christian faith belongs neither to the first, nor to the second, group. It is opposed to both and yet is bound up with both. "It accepts with extant religions the indication of actual occurrence revealing divine reality in a definite, special manner *(besonderer Weise)*. It rests wholly upon such a temporal-spatial happening, or more definitely, upon the reality of such happening" (p. 6). But the Christian faith 'differs from all other religions, in being based, not on many events, but on one event, and in fact with the full consciousness of the *oneness* and *onceness* *(Einzigkeit und Einmaligkeit)* of the fact of revelation. *Eph Hapax,* once-for-all is the category of Christian revelation" (p. 7). "Revelation as the once-occurring is according to its essence that which occurs either once or not at all.... Therefore the so-called special revelations of religions are nothing else than what speculation, religious philosophy and mysticism affirm: mere individual concretions of a universal" (pp. 7, 9).

Strictly, then, according to Brunner there is no revelation either special or general, except the once-for-all revelation in Jesus Christ. And yet one cannot, as a Christian, "believe in a once-for-all revelation, in a Mediator without believing in a general revelation of God in the creation, in history and especially in the conscience" (p. 13).[8]

In the end Brunner practically dismisses the whole question of the state of the heathen regarding revelation and salvation with an Either-Or. There is something good in every religion, as in every philosophy and even materialism. Neither an ambitious religious philosophy nor an increased knowledge of ethnic religions has enabled us to get farther than what the Reformers taught regarding *natural* and *revealed* religion.[9]

(4) *Barth On A Revelation To The Heathen*

If revelation be characterized by *Onceness*, Barth candidly asks: Were "there extra-canonical prophets and apostles?" Was the Daimon of Socrates, the conscience (Rom. 2:15), or the voice of God? Similarly, Laotse, Guatama-Buddha. "Was not Zwingli criticized by Luther and Calvin for admitting into the Christian heaven such outstanding heathen, including Hercules and Theseus? Did they like Abraham and his people receive revelation?

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[8] Brunner deplores that critics of the dialectic theology have off-hand charged that "we deny all general revelation in nature and man. They have not understood that the dialectics of faith is grounded just herein that man in himself bears a divine, though blurred image of God, that the originally good creation is therefore a God-revealing creation. The question is not whether there was a general revelation, but in what sense, whether direct or indirect, whether the revelation in Christ is the climax of this general revelation or something quite different, in short the real revelation."

[9] "Die Heiden wissen nichts Gewisses, nichts Festes, nichts Bestimmtes, sondern confusis principiis esse affixos ut deum incognitum adorent" (Calvin, **Institutio**, I, p. 5).

To affirm an impossibility might seem narrow" (Barth).[10] Barth writes: "There is no need to assert the absoluteness of Christianity. Revelation is *absolute.* He who believes in revelation will not say that it could not have reached some whose record is not found in the Biblical canon" (250). When all has been said *pro* and *con* "a rigid paradox" ensues, since we can know nothing definite as to God's providence. We cannot know to whom God reveals himself. What then becomes of the hypothesis of *Onceness* and *Mediacy?* If God be revealed only in Scripture and if there be no salvation out of Christ, will all the heathen be lost? If, conversely, he is revealed to the heathen, the hypothesis of *Onceness* is shattered.

B. PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY AND THEOLOGY

1. Hegel's Philosophy Of History

With Hegel all history is evolution of the idea; even the apparently superrational is construed as a phenomenal antithesis. Brunner remarks that the view occasionally expressed that Hegel was the greatest superrationalist, transcendentalist *(Irrationalismus)* is not quite correct. He indeed found a place for the super-rational in his system, but in the end it is subordinated to reason. His dialectics swallows his transcendental. We understand Barth and Brunner to hold that their transcendental swallows reason.

There is no possibility of being a Christian, other than through faith in the Mediator who offered a sacrifice once-for-all. "There are people of whom we can say good things, but out of Christ they are not Christians. The scandal of contemporaneous thought is that men must come to God through Christ; otherwise they reject the doctrine of *mediacy* or *onceness*. Reason, though of divine origin, is not God and ought to know her place. There are truths in regard to God and man which the unaided reason cannot discover." Reason exalted herself until she ended in the vulgar rationalism of yesterday, and today, according to which the only revelation is the inborn revelation in man, as says Wegschneider. Brunner charges that even Schleiermacher, though he broke away from the common rationalism, taught a type of universal religion, "religion within the religions," except that he found it in feeling, not in the will or intellect. He failed to do justice to the person of Christ. In short, these men failed to recognize Jesus Christ as the Mediator once-for-all.

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[10] "The manner in which the Bible speaks of the heathen, from Melchizedeck, king of Salem, the Moabitess Ruth, the Syro-Phoenician Naaman, Cyrus, the anointed of the Lord, to the Wise men of the East, warns us not to regard the heathen merely as objects of Christian Missions" (Dogm. I, p. 250).

The crisis between Christianity and modern thought lies in the question of Christ's personality. "The old dogma of the second person of the Godhead collapses under the pressure of the increasing mass of knowledge in science and history" (Wernle). If he is not the Son of God who is he? (Brunner).

2. *Christian Faith And Historical Investigation*

The idea of the once-for-all is unknown outside of the Christian faith. The onceness is absolute (*M.* p. 129). Our relation to Jesus is for the sake of the *Onceness,* a special case. "This special relation to the Onceness, is Christian faith."

The object of history is to reproduce the past. "Christian faith, therefore, knowing that the human Ego is weak and sick and not able to see the deep things of God grasps the truth through the eye illumined by the Holy Spirit. [Transcendental.] From this point there arises a new category of significance for the history of revelation." This means that one accepts the revelation contained in the New Testament and then by a strange procedure uses such revelation to evaluate the historical record. Brunner would say that this signifies, not necessarily distrust of the narrative, but that "the human eye opened by the Holy Spirit can see the true history." "Only faith is capable of knowing the historical reality of Jesus Christ." If according to the Heidelberg Catechism faith is, among other things, "a certain knowledge *(certa notitia),*" it is evident that faith must have knowledge from the New Testament that Jesus actually was on the stage of history.

3. Concretion

"Idea even if viewed in historical *concretion* has no reference to time. Idea is timeless and therefore changes history into the timeless through the thought of development. The course of history is determined in advance and he who knows the law of its movement (Hegel) knows its end." And yet Brunner tells us that back of conceptual thought there is a fundamental connection between space and intuition. Faith is the *schema* of the ever present, time is the *schema* of *Onceness.* Time in every movement presents to us an either-or. Idea has reference to space not to time; therefore its symbols are spacial, as in fact the word *idea* means something seen" (*M.* p. 343).[11]

4. Mediacy And Immediacy

Barthians set themselves like flint against what they call "immediacy" *(Unmittelbarkeit)* in religion. Christian faith knows no immediacy, for Jesus Christ is the Mediator. Brunner in his Philosophy of Evangelical theology has developed the Mediacy and Once-for-all doctrine at great length. He traces the roots of false views to Hegel's God-consciousness in man, and Schleiermacher's semi-pantheism and God-consciousness in feeling. All such views are a denial of Jesus Christ as Mediator between God and man.

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[11] "Historical concretion is something quite different from revelation. For concretion has as its correlate a universal. History is not conceived existentially as place of determination as long as it is first of all conceived as place of concretion....The strength of transcendental rationalism forbids and the seriousness of practical thought requires the recognition of the mythus as truth. In the one case the **a priori** remains as valid truth, controlled by the laws of thought. In the other case, with the complete breaking through of the practical seriousness, some kind of event is indicated" (M. pp. 242, 344).

"That God can be known only through God is the common premise of this idealistic and of the Christian doctrine of Revelation. Biedermann, the chief representative of the idealistic rationalism in protestant theology, teaches concerning revelation that it 'is the act of the self-manifestation of God toward man. . .the *actus purus* of the Absolute Spirit in the life of the finite spirit, and indeed in actual reciprocal relation with the finite individual spiritual acts of the human self.' The decisive difference lies herein that for the idealist this self-manifestation is fundamentally immediate, for Christian faith fundamentally mediate."[12]

5. *Pietism, Mysticism, Schleiermacherism*

Partly as an outgrowth of medieval mysticism, but chiefly as a reaction against the rigid view of the Bible *(die orthodoxe Versteinerung der Bibelwahrheit)*, pietism, romanticism, Schleiermacherism tended to undermine the doctrine of special revelation in Christ. Even Tillich leaves us in doubt whether "a revelation is universal, a fundamentally *semper ubique* Identity, or a definite *once-for-all,* and therefore a decisive event." Combining pietism, mysticism, Schleiermacherism, religion now came to be viewed as "immediate unity with the world-ground. But immediacy means not only fundamental independence of everything historical, but at the same time of every idea. It is therefore within the whole of reason the sphere of the super-rational *(Irrationalen)*...The religious *a priori* of these men, Troeltsch, Otto, Scholz, etc., is not always the same, but their fundamental antithesis to the Christian doctrine of revelation overshadows minor differences. That which is known as the Christian doctrine of revelation has here no place....The Christ-faith alongside of mysticism is regarded as iron-clad dogmatic Christianity" (*RPET.* p. 19).

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[12] "Biedermann does indeed speak of 'mediation,' but he means nothing more than 'the general and the psychic capability of man.' Therefore, faith is fundamentally independent of the historical revelation. Jesus Christ is only in a figurative sense revelation in so far as in him religiosity expresses the essence of religion in a stronger and purer form than among the others....There is here no definiteness and ONCENESS of revelation, but only special expressions of a universal and ever present possibility. The distinguishing Christian conception of revelation, the manifestation of the divine mystery, is excluded" (**RPET.** p. 17).

6. Historism

Schleiermacher, Ritschl and Troeltsch are the triumvirate who have taught an inadequate view of Christ, revelation and redemption. With the Reformers "it was not a question of judgment of *worth* (i.e., measurement by a moral ideal) but judgment of *reality:* we call him God, because he is God. We view him [Christ] as the revelation of God because he makes known to us that which apart from him we cannot know. Between this Reformation view and the Ritschlian there is an unbridgeable gulf...What Ritschl calls revelation is merely concretionism, realization of an accepted idea; only that here it is an ethical idea."

But such historism is self-destructive. "It is the latest phase of theology, the historico-religious (in its leading representative Troeltsch) which first developed the principles of historism to the bitter end and thereby destroyed theology as such." What is history, asks Troeltsch? It is an unending flux, continuity, relativity. Consequently all

Biblical history is only a phase of universal history. The absoluteness of Christianity is accordingly denied. Revelation is merely an internal, religious experience, possible for every one. Christianity is "not the only revelation and redemption, but merely the climax of human self-revelation and atonement" (Troeltsch), attained in Christ.[13]

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[13] The conclusion reached by liberal German theologians, that Christ is the resultant of an immanent evolutionary process, is widely proclaimed by liberal American writers. "Evolution must include Jesus, or we must abandon the theory. There is no break or flaw, or chasm. The process is one from fire-mist to soul; from the soul to its highest specimen and expression. Jesus is as much a product of the laws and forces in nature and society as Shakespeare or Napoleon." (Shutter, **Applied Evolution,** p. 199). Professor Powell writes: "From the standpoint of evolution Jesus does not appear as the incarnation of God, but far more than that, as the incarnation of one hundred thousand years of man....God was incarnate in humanity. The brute began to die; Christ was born." (**Our Heredity from God,** p. 260). That the trend of thought regarding Christ is in the direction of an evolutionistic evaluation is seen in "**Jesus, a New Biography,**" by Prof. S. J. Case of the University of Chicago. The book is new in the sense of "recent," but not in viewpoint. It doubts the authenticity and credibility of the Gospels, reflects the old Baur-Wellhausen naturalism and does not rise above a cultured Unitarianism. As to the Gospels, there are "unhistorical features in the documents; they are not "true history"; the authenticity of Matthew is "not apparent and there is little left of any historical value as a source of information about Jesus".... A critical examination of the Fourth Gospel "has resulted in an unfavorable judgment regarding its worth as a witness to the historical Jesus." Case deletes all passages recording supernatural events. Dr. Henry Clark writes: "The incarnation of God in Christ was nothing else than the incarnation of God in all men carried up to its superlative degree—to which superlative degree the incarnation of God in all men was also to be carried up at last" (**Liberal Orthodoxy,** p. 285). Barth and Brunner deserve credit for denouncing the modernistic hypothesis of divine immanence, which making God and man ontologically one, has no place for the supernatural, or the super-rational. All is natural, all is supernatural. Dr. A. C. Dieffenbach, editor of the **Christian Register,** in a recent book, concedes that religious liberalism of the Unitarian type is a dismal failure: "The opportunity for liberalism came, but our prophets were found wanting." Dr. Dieffenbach has probably forgotten what Dr. Arthur Sachs, of the University of Breslau wrote: "Every liberalistic religion carries in its bosom the seeds of death. A religion without dogma is a creature of the imagination which under no circumstances is able to give to individual man, much less to the human family, the necessary anchor-hold in this life and the hope for perfection in the beyond. At the moment it becomes 'liberal' it begins to degrade into a mere philosophy." "Robert Blatchford writes: "Accepting evolution how can there be a fall?...If there

Brunner describes cogently that modernistic theologians have departed from the Christian faith. "All these, Ritschl no less than Schleiermacher, predicate a universal conception of religion and construe the Christ-revelation as a concretion of this universality. That the revelation in Christ is merely a higher form of revelation than in Hinduism and Buddhism, is taught neither by the Apostles, the Reformers, nor the Church fathers. Neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved. For Christian faith revelation is not a universal possibility, no *semper et ubique* event, but a once-for-all, definite, concrete occurrence."

C. THE BARTHIAN THEORY OF HISTORY

The chasm between God and man, and man's inability to accomplish anything really valuable and lasting, lead in Barthianism to a remarkable and (be it said at once) an anti-Christian view of Biblical history. The records and narratives of the Bible, according to one of those ever recurring false paradoxes, are not to be viewed as *history*, though they contain a *revelation*. To the average mind the absurdity is so evident as to be its own refutation. Not so, to the Barthian mind, which, as we have seen all along, delights in *Credo quia absurdum*. Man is a creature of time and sense and all that he does and thinks is vain and illusory, above all when the attempts to write history, especially Biblical history, for that is unrecordable. That such is the Barthian view we have shown by abundant citations. Barth himself says that the Old Testament does not profess to record history, but is merely "a series of fruitless attempts at an impossible undertaking"; Thurneysen accepts the Grafian view of the Pentateuchal Codes (which, as says Duhm, "wipes out the

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never was a fall, why should there be any atonement?" (**God and My Neighbor**, p. 159). Barthians, so far as we have been able to discover, have no plan to meet such false evolutionism.

Mosaic age"); Brunner says that he is "an adherent of a rather radical school of Biblical criticism, which does not accept the Gospel of John as an historical source and which finds legends in many parts of the gospels"; A. Bultmann caps the climax by unflinchingly affirming that "of the life and personality of Jesus' we know practically nothing, *"wirklich nichts."*[14]

What must be one's attitude toward such a sweeping denial of the historical background of Hebraism and Christianity? Is not Christianity an historical religion, a religion traceable to a definite period in the world's history? If not, the characters appearing in the Bible cannot be shown to have any more reality than those in the Homeric poems, or the Jesus of the New Testament to have existed any more than the Zeus of Greek myth.

1. Dr. P. Schaff On Biblical Records And History

This whole false presentation in Barthianism has been exposed time and time again. Dr. P. Schaff in his *History of Apostolic Christianity* points out the falsity of the whole negative and destructive criticism, tracing it to the two antagonistic schools represented respectively by Neander and Baur, the former conservative and constructive, the latter revolutionary and destructive. "The former accepts the Canonical Gospels as honest, truthful and credible memoirs of the life of Christ and the labors of the apostles; the latter rejects a great part of their contents as unhistorical myths and legends of the postapostolic age, and on the other hand gives undue credit to wild heretical romances of the second century...The one proceeds on the basis of Faith in God and Christ, which implies faith in the supernatural and miraculous whenever well attested; the other proceeds from disbelief in the supernatural and miraculous as a philosophical impossibility, and tries to explain the gospel and the apostoic history from purely natural causes like every other history" (p. 208).[15]

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[14] What would Drs. E. V. Gerhart, T. G. Apple, Theodore Appel, H. Muehlmeier, H. J. Ruetenik, Herman Rust, H. A. Meier, J. H. A. Bomberger, Jeremiah H. Good, James I. Good, G. W. Williard, G. W. Welker and a host of worthies of other days think of such a return to the Baur-Strauss-Renan heresy of a century ago? Some would unhesitatingly affirm that Brunner's unfortunate, though candid acceptance of the most radical and destructive New Testament criticism, is sufficient to condemn his whole shrewdly arranged program. The absurdity of boldly predicating a revelation from "the Yonside" without a base line on "this side," would seem obvious to every reflecting mind. And what would they think of Barth's contention that man can know nothing about God, that faith is **Hohlraum**, Emptiness, **Hybris**, insolence, and that a double predestination, supralapsarianism in short, is the true Reformed doctrine?

Our criticism here is that at a time when the "crisis" between Christianity and anti-Christianity is most acute, Barthianism, accepting the Baur, Bousset-Drews-Ludwig naturalistic worldview and destructive New Testament criticism, surrenders absolutely the possibility of placing the Christian religion on a safe historic footing and goes over *"mit Sack und Pack,"* "body, soul and breeches" to the enemy. Gradually the scientific premise that the universe is absolutely and without exception controlled according to natural law and is accordingly a "closed system," with which not even God (if there be one) ever interferes, has scooped into its capacious maw the domain of history, as well as of anthropology, psychology and religion. Formerly it was held that great men, outstanding personalities, Moses, Alexander, Julius Caesar, Constantine, Napoleon, Gladstone, Roosevelt, Wilson, rose above environment and *made history.* Now we are told that there are not, and never were *great* men in their own right; they were simply thrown on the surface by resident cosmic forces and could not help being what they were. In short history becomes a branch of physics as inevitable as the phenomena of nature.[16]

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[15] Dr. Shaff goes on to say that it is a question whether there is a God n history or not, as the contemporaneous question in science is whether there is a God in nature or not. Belief in a personal God almighty and omnipotent in history and in nature implies the possibility of supernatural and miraculous revelation. Absolute prepossession (**Voraussetzungslosigkeit**, such as Strauss demanded) is absolutely impossible. There is prepossession on either side of the controversy, the one positive, the other negative, and history itself must decide between them, says Schaff.

Applied to the New Testament, the naturalistic theory of history, necessarily regards Jesus as only a man among others (see above, p. 190), the resultant of an evolutionary process. Such is the substance of Emil Ludwig's "Son of Man," as of Bousset's and Drews' characterization of Jesus. The essence of the negative criticism is summed up in the language of Drews: "Jesus never lived," as you and I live on the stage of history.

Bousset wrote: "We need no longer be concerned about the historical reality of Jesus.... It is not a question of fact, but of symbol, the picture of Jesus as poetry and truth *(Dichtung und Wahrheit)* will remain more potent than all ever so accurate historical investigations" *(The Significance of the Person of Christ)*. This was written by Bousset, but it might have been written by Brunner or Bultmann.

2. Grützmacher On Sacred History

There has appeared an unusually opportune and illuminating paper by Dr. H. R. Grützmacher, Weisbaden, Germany on *"Christianity and History,"* from which we translate, giving additional matter in the original in the foot-notes. Neither the word Barth nor the dialectic theology is mentioned, but the whole article could not have been a more thorough exposé of the false Barthian conception of Biblical history if such had been its direct purpose. Grützmacher writes: "The modern historical method rejects a special Christian history of salvation and in fact endangers the value of profane history.... This issue is not to be settled on the Christian and theological side by ignoring the historical elements in Christianity as immaterial, or by abandoning them as insignificant." Referring to H. Schulz's statement that the havoc created by the negative criticism may be ignored, if only we accept Christ as a creative personality, Grützmacher says: "But the works of Christ can be regarded as his works, only if he himself was unquestionably an historic and creative personality and can only under this presupposition lead to faith in him and the God revealed in him. If on the other hand Christ cannot be shown scientifically to have been a historic figure, all contemporaneous Christian activities rest on the *authors* of the Christian myths," in which case there could be as much proof of the existence of the Homeric gods as of God or Jesus Christ.[17]

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[16] Some years ago H. Taine wrote a history of English literature on the theory that the great literary characters of England were the result of an evolutionary process and not forceful and originating personalities. This view, though fundamentally false, in making man a machine, is rapidly gaining ground.

The Barthian view of history virtually denies the Biblical and Reformed Doctrine of providence, "the almighty and everywhere present power of God; whereby he upholds and governs heaven, earth and all creatures...so that all things come not by chance, but by his fatherly hand" (Heid. Cat. 27). Thelemann comments thus: "The very special providence of God relates to the kingdom of God and to his children....From the call of Abraham the progenitor, until the leading out of the people from Egypt; the development of the public life of the people in the desert and the direction of the political life in Canaan; the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans as scourges of Israel in the hands of the Lord....The providence of God in the preservation and government of his kingdom relates to its inner development (Reformation) and its protection against enemies, as well as to its final consummation as depicted in the revelation of St. John, Rev. 11:15; 19:6" (p. 104).

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[17] G. proceeds: "Die Eigenart der Christlichen Religion und Weltanschauung besteht in einer unauflösslichen Synthese zwischen Geschichte und Metaphysik, Zeitlichem und Ewigem, Menschlichem und Göttlichem—unter voller Gleichwertigkeit beider Seiten. Infolgedessen kann der Konflikt zwischen Christentum und Geschichte nicht defensive durch Preisgabe der Offenbarungsgeschichte, sondern nur offensive durch **Kritik an der modernen historischen Methode** gelösst werden."

From eternity God's plan involved a most intimate reciprocal relation (not un-relation, as Barth teaches) between God and man for the redemption of the race.[18] Such relation is known to us through authentic and well attested historical documents and constitutes an overwhelming proof that Christianity from first to last has been an historical religion. Barth's low and inadequate view of history, of Biblical history in particular, is one of the most objectionable features of his dialectics.[19]

3. Historical And Super-Historical In Christianity

Recently there has arisen in Germany a small group of writers not directly affiliated with Barthianism, but announcing principles in some respects running parallel. It is the so-called *Historical and Super-Historical* Conception. Its chief exponent is Martin Dibelius[20] Unlike Barthians, Dibelius recognizes the value of Biblical history, but like Barthians he stresses, though in a different way, the super or trans-historical, the region not accessible to man, and yet truly real. "In Christianity, not the mere contact with the divine is the essence of salvation, but the inner vital determinateness of the Divine." Such determinateness is an historical datum, and therefore Christianity cannot be "torn away from an historic basis," nor can "the history of Jesus be dissolved into myth" (an implied thrust at Bultmann's dictum that of "the life and personality of Jesus nothing, *wirklich nichst,* is known) but, (and here Bultmann finds comfort) "the perception of this super-historical, that is, of the *unconditioned* existing behind the relative phenomenon, takes place upon a wholly different plane than the knowledge of the historical."

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[18] Grützmacher well says: "In fact world-historical and revelation history are indissolubly interrelated. In the O. T. this is imbedded in the history of the people. Opponents of Israel were the occasion of Messianic prophecies; while conversely prophetical revelations affect the social life. In the N. T. also there are similar inter-relations. Luke indicates this when he dates the Savior's birth in the period when Augustus was the Roman Emperor. Paul formulates the principle in the statement that Christ came in the fulness of time. The natural historical development, that is the preparation for Christ in heathendom is not without significance for the advent of Christ. Conversely, in a very short time, Christianity entered the sphere of world-history." "Von Gott, dem Schöpfer stammt die Weltgeschichte, von Gott dem Erlöser die Heilsgeschichte, von Gott, dem Heiligen Geist ihre Erhaltung und Verinnerlichung bis zur Gegenwart." Gruetzmacher's paper on "**Christentum und Geschichte**" is found in the German section of the "**Theological Magazine**" of the Evangelical Synod of N.A. for July, 1929, pp. 278–88.

[19] As frequently seen in the preceding pages, Barth regards history even at its best, as an 'arraignment' of history. This comes perilously near the dictum: "**Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht,**" 'the history of the world is the judgment of the world,' which is true only in the sense that God's judgments appear in history. What has become of the "**Gott in der Geschichte**" slogan of several generations ago?

"Here I do not understand the author," says Bultmann, "nor do I understand how the perception of the highest values can be transmitted without an historical understanding of the facts. . ., even if super-historical—out of whose super-rational import, out of whose illumination through the light of another world faith grew forth *(emporwuchs).*" If we understand Dibelius, he takes higher ground on the historical character of Christianity, and possibly on the super-historical, that is, the super-natural, transcendental, than Bultmann.

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[20] His book is entitled: "**Geschichtliche und Uebergeschichtliche Religion im Christentum**, 1925. It is reviewed by A. Bultmann, in Zwischen d. Zeiten, 1926, pp. 385–403, to whom we are indebted for a description of the movement.

PART III

BARTHIAN TRANSCENDENTALISM

CHAPTER XIII

THE TRANSCENDENTAL

As Barth constantly acknowledges his indebtedness to Kant a brief outline of Kantism is given in chapter two above, as also a parallel between Kant and Barth. Progress here is possible only if the reader understands something more about the inner character of these philosophies.

A. KANT'S TRANSCENDENTALISM

Kant's philosophy, known as the critical, may with equal correctness be called Transcendental, and we shall see that Barth's theology whatever else it is, is virtually a transcendental philosophy. His Brother Heinrich, a professor of philosophy, says that the theology of crisis is really a *philosophy* of crisis and intimates that it is transcendental. What is transcendentalism?

Before answering the question directly, we must come to an understanding of certain words. In American speech, the words *irrational* and *irrationalism* mean that which is contrary to reason. In classic German philosophy and theology, *irrational* and *irrationalismus* mean that which is *above* reason, or the supernatural.[1] Then, again, in theology, transcendent is opposed to immanent: God is both transcendent and immanent in the cosmos. In epistemology (Kantian) one must distinguish between transcendence, that which lies beyond experience, and immanence, that which is contained in experience. Another antithesis is that of the *a priori,* the connate powers of knowing, and the *a posteriori,* derived from experience.

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[1] "The name of **supernaturalism**, or **irrationalism**, is given to the opposite standpoint, which posits superrational realities (unattainable by the natural light of human knowledge, but known by a special function of faith or presentiment or intuition) or an equally superrational source of knowledge (revelation)." (O. Kuelpe, Univ. Wuertzburg, **Introduction to Philosophy**, p. 187).

Differing from both the subjective and the objective idealism of later date, Kant's philosophy is fundamentally a Transcendental Idealism, according to which the formal elements of knowledge (space, time, the categories of casuality, etc.) are an original endowment of man and inexplicable. They are transcendental in the sense that man cannot explain, but simply accepts them. In the Kantian philosophy *transcendent* is that which is unrealizable in experience. Transcendental pertains to existence in experience of *a priori* elements. There are, says Dugald Stewart, truths so radically different from what are called truths that it might perhaps be useful for logicians "to distinguish them by some appropriate appellation, such for example, as that of metaphysical and transcendental truths."

In the "Critique of Pure Reason," Kant developed the transcendental philosophy exhaustively.[2] Perhaps we can best illustrate Kant's dialectics and transcendentalism by his proof of freedom. "We cannot find a free cause in the sense-world; hence the idea of freedom is not from experience....It is a transcendental idea because reason creates it independent of experience....The denial of transcendent freedom, of spontaneity, would destroy practical or moral freedom....If transcendental freedom is possible, practical freedom is possible" (F. Thilly, *History of Philosophy,* p. 412).

The knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with our *a priori* concepts of objects, Kant calls transcendental, a term whose significance must be clearly grasped. It, or some equivalent, as faith, revelation, has been taken up in theology. It is a convenient and useful word, and the low jibes and cheap wit sometimes heard at its expense usually proceed from persons who do not think deeply. The only question is: What kind of transcendentalism?[3]

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[2] The ordinary fine print German edition covers 675 pages, divided into (I) Elements of Transcendentalism (489 pages), treating of the materials and (II) Methods of Transcendentalism. There are sections on Transcendental Aesthetics, Transcendental Analytic and Transcendental Dialectic.

B. Kant On Human Personality

1. *Kant's View of the Self*

Kant's view of the self is important. Along with the world of reality, known and unknown, is a self, a knower, revealed by simple introspection. No self—no ideas. "No part of Kant's philosophy has more constructive value and none has had more historical significance than his doctrine of the nature of the self. The most characteristic feature of this doctrine is the distinction which he makes between the *transcendental self,* as he calls it, and the *empirical self.*" (Mary Calkins, *Problems,* etc., p. 229).

James Ward writes: "The attempt to discredit the concept of the pure Ego or experient subject by confusing or ignoring the wide difference of meaning between transcendental and transcendent is an attempt that can only impress the ill-informed. We do not maintain that the subject transcends experience, but on the contrary that it is always immanent in experience. This necessary immanence, the fact that experience without experient is unintelligible, is just what transcendental here implies. The concept of a synthesizing subject is epistemologically a priori" *(Psychological Principles,* p. 380). Ward adds that James' derision of Kant's transcendental unity and of the Ego as a "cheap and nasty edition" of the soul is a "blunder simply."

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[3] The New England transcendentalism of Emerson, Parker, Margaret Fuller, Frothingham, etc., is based on Schelling's transcendental idealism, or system of identity, in which "object and subject, real and unreal, nature and spirit are identical in the absolute." (Ueberweg, II, 213)...It is a form of pantheism. The New England type fifty years ago was stigmatized as transcendental "nonsense."

Possibly we may regard Kant's two-fold self as being substantially the distinction usually made between the metaphysical self and the empirical self.

2. The Thing-In-Itself Unknown

Though holding from first to last that there is a world of realities independent of our consciousness of them, Kant teaches that such realities (God included) are unknown and unknowable. (It is this part of Kantism that Barth accepts.)

Kant constantly reiterates that "the understanding can never overstep the limits of sense," and so the mind should never "make a transcendental use" of any of its concepts, that is, should never "apply its concepts to things-in-themselves." But we shall see, presently, that Kant modifies this statement in *"Refutation of Idealism."*

3. God Unknown And Unknowable

Kant's doctrine that only sense objects and empirical selves can be known leads directly to the proposition that God cannot be known. Reviewing the ontological, cosmological and teleological arguments, he concludes that they have little value. "Outside these three paths, no other lies open to speculative reason." In the four antinomies Kant shows that the reason can prove the following contradictory propositions: 1. That the world has a beginning, and that it has not a beginning; 2. That there is a Necessary Being (God) in the world, and that there is no Necessary Being. Reason, therefore, is baffled and Kantians of the right (ministers and theological professors) were convinced that Kant had slain the giant, rationalism. Unfortunately by the same argument, proof of God's existence was rendered impossible.

4. *Did Kant Refute Idealism?*

In the second edition of the first Critique (1787) there are many departures from the first, the most remarkable of which is the section "Refutation of Idealism" *(Widerlegung des Idealismus)*, which has perplexed commentators and is alleged to impair the integrity of the Kantian system. Kant himself says: "My new representation changes absolutely nothing with regard to my propositions and even the arguments in their support." On the other hand Schopenhauer affirms that "Kant had been told that his system was only a rechauffé of Berkeley's Idealism," which seemed to endanger the originality of his contention. Max Müller admits that "it would have been better if, while refuting what he calls empirical idealism, he had declared more strongly his unchanged adherence to the principles of Transcendental Idealism" (*Trans.* p. LXIX).

But what is the substance of the "Refutation"? Kant announces the following theorem: "I am conscious of my own existence as determined in time, and all determination in time presupposes something permanent in the perception....The perception of this permanent is possible only through a thing *outside* me and not through the mere *representation* of a thing outside me....Idealism assumes that the only immediate experience is the *internal*, and that from it we can no more than infer external things." Kant accordingly teaches that external experience and internal experience are immediate.[4]

5. *Kant's Critique of the Practical Reason*

In the first Critique a Supreme Being remains a high, faultless ideal whose objective reality cannot be proved.

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[4] In a foot-note Kant writes: "The immediate consciousness of the existence of external things is not assumed in the preceding theorem, but proved, whether we can understand the possibility of this seriousness or not" (p. 780, sec. Ed.). This is Ideal-Realism, the correct view.

Why and how does this ideal, this regulative principle, arise? Kant proceeds to answer. The idea is grounded in the necessity of thought and the moral consciousness. Here Kant restores practically what he had rejected theoretically. Freedom, says Kant, is a fact of inner experience and the categorical imperative is the necessary law of freedom binding upon all. Hence, act so that the maxims of the will can be a universally valid principle.

By an analogous train of reasoning Kant holds that the existence of God must be predicated in order that the highest good may be possible. "Freedom, immortality and God gain objective reality through an apodictic law, as necessary conditions of the possibility of that which the law commands shall be its object." According to the Encyclopedia Britannica no system is theistic which denies Kant's postulates of God, Freedom and Immortality.

As was seen above, Karl Barth accepts the agnostic premises of the First Critique and endangers his whole system.

C. BARTH'S TRANSCENDENTAL EPISTEMOLOGY

Barth's epistemology is an indefinite, if not unknown quantity. It is a negation in one form or another of practically all historical systems. We read: "*Romans* appeals neither to an authoritative faith nor a power of constructive thinking, nor to a sense for higher worlds, nor to a special capacity for knowledge *(Erkenntnisfähigkeit)*, nor a cultured conscience, nor a religious feeling, but to a *Sensus Communis,* to a 'universal feeling of truth' (Oetinger) to a childlike simplicity (yes indeed) of those who have seen through the confusion of the mistaken simpleness of which this generation boasts and is satiated therewith" (*Rbr.* p. 511).

God, says Barth, can after all be known; "The knowledge of God is so simple and so comprehensive that it is also very perplexing....The knowledge of God is the presupposition on the basis of which consciously, half-consciously all our reasonings for meaning are made.... We come to it (the Bible) as if it could tell us something that we do not in our heart of hearts already know *(was wir nicht im tieffsten Sinne schon wissen)" (WGuT.* p. 71, tr. 52). This looks like a kind of intuitionism, against which Barth in other places protests.

1. No Formal, But An Underlying Epistemology

God cannot be known and yet he is known through transcendental mediation. Intellectualism, sensationalism, empiricism, idealism, pragmatism, instrumentalism, concretionism, or under whatever banners professors of philosophy wrangle, do not primarily interest Barth; such theories are one and all products of man; as are humanism, anthropology, behaviorism.

The starting point of religious knowledge lies in the spiritual, eternal, transcendental world, which as the only world of absolute truth, effects a contact with the human soul. With Kant the problem was how to discover terrestrial verities; with Barth, how to discover celestial verities. Both assume a soul and a transcendent background. (The soul must be assumed as an entity or all reasoning is provisional.) Kant predicated a moral consciousness as guaranteeing God, freedom and immortality; Barth postulates a transcendent God and a transcendental faith as a basis of religion and revelation.

According to Kant the senses furnish the material of knowledge, but the mind works it over and pronounces judgment. Such judgment, however, does not reach the thing-in-itself. According to Barth the transcendent and the immanent, the eternal and the temporal, are so related, that man can through a foreordained medium (faith), as Luther and Calvin taught, acquire a knowledge of God and the key to all theology.

2. *Barth's Third-Dimension Or The Transcendental*

Barth writes: "The Resurrection is the *one experience of man.* Actual experience begins where our alleged experiences cease, in the crisis of our experience, in the fear of God. . . . God is the subject of this history, human history and he alone; but it is a God beyond and above *man,* who is the element in which *man originally* moves, lives and has his being. . ., Who will lend to man the first fruits of the Spirit" (*WGuT.* p. 97, tr. p. 94).

Barth, as seen in numerous passages, reverses the Kantian order. According to Kant, man postulates God, freedom and immortality; according to Barth, God is the prime Mover, and man the *individual,* whom God knows and who knows God (inwardly). Observe that Barth in the citation below has in mind the *God-fearing individual,* not the people en masse. Barth's meaning becomes clearer in the following: "I mean a movement from above, a movement from the *third dimension,* so to speak, which *transcends* and yet penetrates all these movements of mankind and gives them their inner meaning and motive; a movement which has neither its originator nor its aim in space, in time, or in the contingency of things, and yet it is not a movement apart from others; I mean the movement of God in history, or, otherwise expressed, the movement of God in consciousness, the movement whose power and import are revealed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (*WGuT.* p. 40, tr. 283).

This is the key to the new epistemology, the new transcendentalism, a perpendicular line from heaven to earth (*senkrecht von oben*) which differentiates eternity from time, and things eternal from things temporal. This will become clearer as we proceed.

D. TRANSCENDENCE AND IMMANENCE

1. Cosmological

Assuming that God created the physical universe in time, we are confronted by the question, to what extent God is transcendent and immanent in the cosmos. It is an old question, but since Barthians have given it a new turn we must face it. It has been said that theism overemphasizes the transcendence, pantheism, the immanence. Theism presupposes the existence of a personal, antemundane God who creates and preserves the universe and directs events toward the accomplishment of his infinitely wise purpose. He is supposed to be prior to, and distinct from the universe.

According to pantheism God, man and the physical universe are in some inexplicable manner identical. Our being is affirmed to be a part of the being of God. Spinoza held that the one eternal self-existing, *sui-causa,* reality is substance with an infinite number of qualities, of which we know two, mind and matter. These are inseparable. Men are only transitory forms of substance. This Spinozistic philosophy is at the basis of anti-Christian theories of today, such as theosophy, New Thought, hylozoism, materialism, Christian Science, the New Humanism, etc.

2. Transcendence And Immanence In Scripture

The Bible clearly teaches both transcendence and immanence. Paul tells the Athenians, "In him (God) we live and move and have our being," Acts 17:28. Cyprian explained this as meaning: In God we *are,* in Christ we *live,* in the Holy Spirit we *move.* God is nearer us than we imagine. Then, again, "One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all and in all," Eph. 4:6. God is *through* all; this is the truth in immanence; but he is *over all;* this is the truth in transcendence. "He who is over all and in all is yet distinct from all. If one is over a thing, he is not that very thing which he is over. If one is in something, he must be distinct from that something. And so the universe, over which and in which God is, must be thought of as something distinct from God" (G. D. B. Pepper).

3. Views On Transcendence And Immanence

Although not exactly the same, the subject of transcendence versus immanence has been treated under other heads, such as theism and pantheism, God and nature, creationism and evolutionism; the underlying philosophical question from Plato to Hegel has been the relation of the One to the many. In recent times, theologians more than ever have followed the wonderful discoveries in science and the deductions therefrom, some of which confirm, others undermine the Genesis cosmogony. The vast reign of law, the Einstein and other theories, the relation between mind and matter, the supremacy of spirit have broadened the theological horizon and necessitated a re-examination of older views. Barth, Gogarten, Brunner, Thurneysen deserve praise for bringing to the front the relation of God to man and the cosmos. Whether they have bridged the chasm is the paramount question.

4. Anthropological And Epistemological

In the preceding section the transcendence and immanence of God in nature is set forth; here we discuss the transcendence and immanence in man. Is God so transcendently above and foreign to man that man cannot have even a thought of God? Or is man so endowed that though he cannot save himself, he is at least salvable and may have thoughts of God without being pantheistically one with God?

We propose to inquire whether Barthianism does not confound pantheism and a true immanence. It is questionable whether Barthians, apart from the point that man is a helpless sinner, entertain an adequate view of man. In his Inaugural address in 1922 on *"The Limits of Humanity" (Die Grenzen der Humanität)* Prof. E. Brunner bitterly assails the false human immanence which seeks to discover a religion, not necessarily without a God, but without a *revelation* from God. "Religion in itself is the most unreliable of all things human. Religion which rests in itself, which misunderstands its aim and purpose, is the most subtle and dangerous betrayal of the truth" (p. 14). In true religion "confines of time are transcended; here, not a man, but God speaks and acts... But this moment is no event, no psychological fact. In so far as it is such it may be left out of the account. Faith as a human experience does indeed take place this side of the dividing line. Here it is not viewed as such, but as a critical *transcendental self-emptying* of the subject, as a manifestation of that which man is not, but which God, the Absolute, is" (p. 15). Brunner finds everywhere in theology a psychologism whose champions have not been delivered from the spell into which the theological Paginini, Schleiermacher, the greatest theological performer (Virtuoso) of the century, has transported us with his program of *pious emotion*....“The Reformers would have condemned as papistic heresy Schleiermacher's basic thesis that we have God in feeling and in experience" (pp. 17, 19). Either God is he who grounds everything or he is not God. "No analysis of religious consciousness or experience leads to God; only the venture to place God first is the presupposition of all else—the venture of faith—to assign religion to its proper place." This conception that man cannot know God, has no capacity for God, but yet imagines that he has, runs through all Barthian literature, as was shown in preceding chapters.

5. True Immanence Neither Pantheism Nor Humanism

As has been abundantly shown in the foregoing chapters, Barthians without exception argue that reason, and immanence have displaced revelation and transcendence. This applies especially to Prof. Brunner as citations from half a dozen of his books show. In a recent work he writes "Shall we not be forced to say that the issue between reason and revelation, between the modern doctrine of immanence and Biblical transcendence, is once for all decided in favor of reason? It certainly seems so." (*TC.* p. 5.) In answering the question whether we can know God, "One affirms that we can know him on the ground of divine immanence; the other asserts it is on the ground of divine transcendence" (p. 28). Of this latter citation we accept the second half, also the first half in so far as it pertains to man's inability to save himself, but dissent in so far as it pertains to man's inability to know God in any sense. Our objection is based on Brunner's false view of man as a person. Brunner writes: "For this very reason viz, that in the religion of immanence man is already in God and God in man, man never becomes a real personality. For decision is the essence of personality. Only when man comes to a crisis and is compelled to choose between life and death does he become a personality. At the very moment when God challenges him to make decision man is given personality. Faith and personality are identical" (p. 30). While the phenomenalist, pragmatist and behaviorist hold that there is no self at all, but merely states of consciousness, Brunner holds that personality arises only with faith,—the absurdest of all absurd propositions. No faith, no personality. This contradicts both Scripture and a sound psychology. "And

Jehovah God. . .breathed into his nostrils the breath of life *(neshemath hayyim)* and he became a living soul *(nephesh hayyah)*" Gen. 2:7. On this Delitzsch says: "His having a soul is the consequence of his having a spirit, and the latter is a mysteriously creative act of God, exclusively appropriated to the creation of man....The spirit-soul of man is self-conscious, and capable of indefinite development, because it is God-descended" (Gen. 1, 12).[5]

It is true that man as a person has different experiences from day to day, but he is a metaphysically abiding self, the same throughout life. Professor W. James allowed that the soul ontologically, though not experientially is the same at birth as at the judgment day. Man is a creation, not an emanation, of God and as a self-conscious, self-determining agent may study God's works, not in virtue of what Brunner calls "divine immanence" but in virtue of his selfhood. Otherwise he could not be held accountable, Rom. 1:18, 19. We accept the legitimacy of Brunner's contention over against pantheism and all pantheizing tendencies, but not as over against a true Christian theism and a sound anthropology and epistemology. There is to be sure a dangerous something which Brunner calls a "religion of immanence," but for which an equally appropriate term is *ambitious depravity* or *depraved ambition* of the human race.

6. *The Christian Doctrine Of Immanence*

Brunner would make it appear that immanence is necessarily and inevitably pantheism. Not so. Pantheism identifies God, man and the cosmos; Christian immanence holds that God is in the world dynamically and providentially, but not monistically or pantheistically identified with the world. Fire permeates iron, but it is not iron.

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[5] Aug. Dillmann writes: "Das heisst, dass mit dieser, dem Menschen persönlich geltenden Einhauchung die Mittheilung nicht blos der geistigen Lebenskraft des Menschen, des Geistes, gemeint sei" (Die Genesis 54).

Again, he writes: "Man finds God in existing things... A religion based on such a conception of God is monistic and optimistic. It asserts an unbroken unity and *continuity* of God and the natural existence of man" (p. 29). Here again facts are interpreted in two ways. Allowing with Spengler that "every fact, even the simplest, contains, *ab initio* a theory," we can see that there are upward trends and yet remarkable "breaks" in geological ages which can be construed in support of two entirely different and in fact contradictory theories, namely of evolutionism and creationism. To find "God in existing things" does not by any means imply "continuity" as scientifically understood. Was the Old Testament seer who said "The heavens declare the glory of God, etc.," guilty of teaching pantheism and a false immanence? No. He merely by profound reflection under the guidance of the Holy Spirit expressed the great truth that God is Creator and preserver.

A true doctrine of immanence, far from teaching "continuity," guards against it by distinguishing sharlpy between the three orders, the inanimate, the animate and the human. If man as a rational being, in studying the marvels of astronomy, sees God back of all, as did Newton, and as La Place did not, it was not due to immanence, pantheism, monism, as such, but to the independent judgments of the men. The question is not decided by the individual opinion of either Newton or LaPlace.

We read further: "An impersonal God and an impersonal man are the necessary and inevitable consequences of a religion of immanence. A personal God and a personal faith are not possible when our knowledge of God is the result of an interpretation of the world and the Ego" (p. 31). If by the "religion of Immanence" Brunner wishes to designate scientists, psychologists and humanists who see no proof of God in the universe, who boldly declare there is no God and that there must be a religion without God, and if further such men and others are philosophically determinists and psychologically behaviorists, personality of any sort is out of the question. But if he places in the same category a group of scholars, not indeed large, but influential, who see evidence of design everywhere in the mysterious universe and occupy an essentially theistic position (even apart from revelation) we regard him as in error in holding that this implies "an impersonal God and an impersonal man." How the world is to be interpreted is the question at issue. We agree with Brunner that Scripture is our standard of authority. But we also hold, as apparently Brunner does not, that the Ego plays its part, and a prominent one in "interpreting" the world. If only Barthians would explain clearly how their transcendent and transcendental Ego dispels doubt, it would save the human Ego a world of perplexity. But Barthians themselves, Brunner with the rest, tell us that even this revealed God is not revealed, but remains hidden, and so we are more perplexed than ever.

Man, as the sophists falsely taught, is not "the measure of things," but it is a strange fact that men everywhere (Barthians included) "measure" the Bible, revelation, Christ, truth by their own yardstick, and none more so than Brunner. We are almost at the point at which, if charity did not forbid, we could charge brother Brunner with himself starting-with and accepting a "religion of immanence," for like the rest of mankind he must start with the Ego.

7. Barth's Finitum Non Capax Infiniti

Barth's view of the qualitative difference between God and man leads him to the conclusion that finite man can have no adequate conception of God. Even as revealed in Christ God is *transcendent:* "What is the vast distance from us of Christ in heaven, as the Reformed Churches conceived it but an expression of the attribute of hiddenness and transcendence which God maintains for our salvation, even when and just when he gives himself to us and the world"? (*WGuT.* p. 204, tr. 258). Barth lauds "the perseverance of the fathers in the direction of a *dialectic* and *indirect* understanding of the revelation and self-communication of God," which allowed "God to be God and caused man to remember he was dust and ashes."

Barth's doctrine of the absoluteness of God and man's incapacity to know God must be supplemented by Brunner's statement: "We hold, i. e., that God cannot be known by his active presence in the world. His presence in nature and history is not denied, but it is regarded as hidden, so that what God *is,* is not revealed" (*TC.* p. 28). Neither does Scripture nor Christ, according to Barthians, "reveal" God; he is still "hidden." We hold, e. g., that the marvels of astronomy reveal that there *is* a God, not necessarily *all* that he *is.* Men believe there is electricity; nobody knows *what* it is.

E. THE RECIPROCAL RELATION OF GOD AND MAN ACCORDING TO THE REV. DR. E. V. GERHART

Not unlike other German writers who know little and care less about American thought, Barth seems never to have heard of Charles Hodge, Aug. H. Strong, W. A. Brown, C. P. Krauth, Shailer Matthews, Francis Patton, E. V. Gerhart, not to mention a number of prominent American theologians of later date. This is excusable on the ground that he has a Swiss and German public in mind. Since, however, he writes as a theologian of the Reformed Church it may not be amiss to state the position of the Rev. Dr. E. V. Gerhart, many years professor of systematic theology in the Reformed Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.

Directly antagonizing Barth, Gerhart writes: "Thought in one respect can transcend its finite sphere. Though limited and feeble, it can rise to the perception and contemplation of absolute Truth. Contrary to the maxim of Aristotle, Christological theology is warranted in maintaining that there is proportion between the ethical finite and the ethical infinite. *Finitum capax infiniti.* Finite personality answers to infinite personality...The Infinite Godhead and finite manhood are in affinity. To God man is attuned, both as personal existence and as knowing subject" *(Institutes of the Chris. Religion,* I, pp. 206, 205).

On the image of God in man, Gerhart says: "The constitution of man being fashioned in the image of God, there exists a correlation between God as God and man as man...Between the infinite essence of the Godhead and the finite being of mankind there is reciprocal fitness... Man is the type or living mirror of God; and this mirror is focalized in personality. Each exists for the other" (*ibid,* pp. 156, 157). God's love implies man's capacity of loving God.[6] God's communion of love with man implies that man's capacity of loving God has become a positive responsive activity and living habit. "If there be affinity between God and man, between the infinite life of the Creator and the finite life of the personal creature, this affinity holds for humanity, not at one point of man's existence, not at one stage, nor under one aspect only, but prevails for humanity at all points and under all its aspects.. God is indeed the infinite being; but infinite being is not rigid fixedness. God's being is the life of infinite love" (pp. 169, 175, 176).

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[6] He adds: "If we reason on the ground of such positive correlation, the axiom, **finitum non capax infiniti,** which for ages reigned in philosophy and Christology, must abdicate; and the consequent doctrine held by the scholastics, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and many others, continued in force by the Reformers (with but few exceptions) of the sixteenth century, and taught by Leibnitz and the Kantian school of philosophy, that the infinite and the finite are mutually exclusive, is dissolved. Instead we are required to hold that the infinite nature of God and the finite nature are in sympathy, **Finitum capax infiniti**" (p. 157). The word capacity (Latin capax) denotes the power of receiving impressions or being acted upon. That a man has a capacity for mathematics or astronomy, does not imply that he can thoroughly understand Newton's Principia or Einstein's theory of relativity. Man has capacity for acquiring various kinds of knowledge. To affirm that he lacks

On man's possibility of receiving a revelation Dr. Gerhart's position is also anti-Barthian: "The ideal relation implies that God is active in love toward man, and that man is responsively active toward God. Revelation, or life-communion, pre-supposes the personal action between the personal Creator and the personal creature of the original, and fundamental law, by virtue of which each turns towards the other; both seek a fellowship of love.. Man as to *essence* is God-like. Man is the transcript of the *Logos,* the pattern in the mount of God after the world-idea culminating in man, the microcosm, has at the foot of the mount been wrought into reality...Believers, the members of Christ may know God and know him as He is in himself. On the contrary if with Aristotle, Kant and many philosophers and theologians, we assume that no positive knowledge of God is possible.., we assume thereby that no positive self-manifestation of God is possible. God may manifest his will concerning his creatures, or show forth his power and goodness, but he cannot reveal *Himself.* Then it would not be true that the incarnate Son has revealed *God,* or that in Christ believers know the true God" (*ibid.* pp. 185, 201, 212).[7]

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capacity partly 'to think God's thoughts after him' is the height of absurdity.

[7] Gerhart proceeds to state that if God is ever the hidden God, there

If Gerhart is essentially correct in the contention that man may have knowledge of God, the *under-pinning* of the Barthian dictum, *Finitum non capax infiniti,* is knocked out and the whole system crumbles as a house of cards. Without a knowledge of God the world is left in pagan darkness.

6. Barthian Philosophy

As seen all along, Barthian philosophy is a species of eclecticism: Kantianism, Neo-Kantianism, Idealism, Realism. A recent writer, professor in a German university, argues that despite his anti-idealistic declarations, Barth cannot get rid of idealism.

— "Barths Antiidealismus kommt trotz aller Bemühungen vom idealistischen Ausgangspunkt nicht los. Er ist, genau so wie sein Ahnherr Kierkegaard, der heimliche Gefangene seines Todfeindes. Barths Theologie und Christologie ist konsequenter Idealismus mit negativen Vorzeichen. An die Stelle der Dialektik der Synthesis, so könnte man formulieren, setzt Barth eine Dialektik der Antithesis, an der Stelle der Philosophie des Organismus tritt die Philosophie des Chaos, die Theologie der Totalität und der Versöhnung wird ersetzt durch eine Theologie des Hiatus und der Krisis" (J. W. Schmidt-Japing, on "Die christologischen Anschauungen der dialektischen Theologie" in "Apologetisches Jahrbuch, 1925, pp. 87–113).

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can be no revelation in Christ: "As regards God's being, the Christian religion would leave us enveloped essentially in the darkness of paganism."

CHAPTER XIV

DER IRRATIONALISMUS (SUPER-RATIONALISM)

A. THE BOAST OF SCIENCE

The man of the street, and the scientist boast that they have no use for metaphysics, intuitions of the mind, universal truths, axioms or postulates of any kind. Professor R. A. Millikan writes: "The purport of science is to develop without prejudice or preconception of any kind, a knowledge of the facts, the laws and the processes of nature." The affirmation that science proceeds "without prejudice or preconception of any kind," is untrue, for science, no less than philosophy and theology, starts with axioms, assumptions and postulates. Herbert Spencer speaks of a scientific no less than a theological "bias." In order that men may reason at all, there must be one or more fundamental truths which all alike accept as points of departure. Professor Alexander Winchell writes: "All fundamental conceptions of science, self, substance, cause, force, life, order, law, purpose, relation, unity, identity, continuity, evolution, natural selection, species, genus, class, are purely metaphysical concepts."

In reasoning we begin with recognizable truths in the inner world as well as with things observed in the outer world. So-called facts are the product of ideation.[1] Scientific belief and Christian faith start with certain self-evident truths and are to this extent analogous.

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[1] "The terms of science are conceptual formulae. We talk glibly of matter, energy, ether, atoms and so on, but these are intellectual counters rather than the realities themselves" (J. A. Thomson). "Science begins with abstractions, and with every step in advance becomes more abstract" (G. A. Wilson, Phil. Rev. May 1922).

Hence the Reformers wrote: *Fides praecedit intellectum.* Scientific belief is based on certain metaphysical concepts, accepted as true, but beyond proof, because they are transcendental. Christian faith is also transcendental in the sense that it rests upon and grows out of the grace imparted by the Holy Spirit in regeneration.

B. INTUITIONS AND POSTULATES

People are so constituted that they accept without proof or argument certain axioms, intuitions, or *a priori* concepts. Herbert Spencer well expresses this: "The fundamental intuitions, that are essential to the process of thinking, must temporarily be accepted as unquestionable." The word intuition means both the act of intuiting in direct vision and that which is intuited. In the sense in which the words are employed by Locke there are no *innate ideas.* His *tabula rasa* is indeed a tablet upon which at birth nothing is written, but it is one *on* which something may be written under proper conditions. Intuitions or *a priori* truths are known by three marks: necessity, rationality and universality. Thus the law of identity is that a thing can not at the same time *be* and *not-be.* Then there are the Aristotelean categories of quantity, quality, relation and modality. No man asks you to prove that a stone has quantity, or form. The common saying, "every effect has a cause" is virtually an intuition of the mind.

No scientist stops to prove that he exists; he could not, if he tried, for he would *assume* existence to prove existence. He accepts existence as a primary fact of consciousness. This consciousness of the self, the Ego, is an ultimate datum, not susceptible of proof, or of definition. To define means to bring under a higher head. But an ultimate, being a *summum genus,* can at most be described, not defined. Among other postulates accepted by science is that the universe is the product of mind, otherwise its laws could not be discovered by mind.[2]

Our object in reviewing briefly the foregoing points is to direct attention to something constantly overlooked in present day thought, namely, a realm or world outside of man which he assumes and must assume as existing, but not admitting of proof. This world or region, as transcending man's power of reason, may be called *super-rational,* that is not contrary to, but *above* reason, as usually understood. In fact the ultimate is the highest reason, which for the scientist is scientific belief, for the theologian, Christian faith. We may designate this as the transcendental world.

Barthians are on the right track here and score heavily in emphasizing this fundamental truth. The only question is: Do they present a consistent, well articulated theory of the transcendental, Biblically, philosophically and theologically defensible? If so, they will go far toward solving the problem of transcendence and immanence, of God's sovereignty and man's free will, in short of a score more of related problems.

C. SUPER-RATIONALISM (DER IRRATIONALISMUS), AS PRAGMATISM

As seen above, according to Külpe, the term *Irrationalismus* thirty years ago was equivalent to the English supernatural. It has now come to be used in a wide divergence of other meanings, as non-rational, pre-rational, anti-rational, super-rational and transcendental.

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[2] "You are certain of the universality of every necessary truth. There is in us a possibility of reaching certainty beyond experience. To do this is to reach a transcendental truth. Transcendental truths are simply those necessary, self-evident, axiomatic truths which transcend experience. Transcendentalism is the science of self-evident, axiomatic, necessary truths. Kant gave this name to a part of his philosophy, and it is by no means a word of reproach" (J. Cook, **Transcendentalism**, pp. 47, 48).

Epistemological, philosophical and frequently theological presuppositions underlie these definitions. If you can find out where a man starts in, you can as a rule know where he will come out. It all depends on his major premise, that is, if he thinks "straight." We review as many of these lines of approach as seem necessary properly to evaluate what we call Barthian Transcendentalism. The literature is chiefly German.

Strange as it may seem, a word formerly denoting supernaturalism has come to denote almost, if not quite, the opposite. A number of books and disquisitions on the subject have appeared within the last decade. The most prolific author is Richard Müller-Freienfels, whom we take as a representative of a mediating position between intellectualism and empiricism.[3] As will be seen his approach is from the side of pragmatism, although he takes occasion to say that he differs from some peculiar pragmatic positions.

He distinguishes between "science" and "Scientific world-views," between a "rationalization of knowledge" and "rationalism" and holds that purely rationalistic methods are inadequate. "If, therefore, by the word *Irrationalismus* I understand the effort to recognize other avenues of knowledge than the intellectual, the rational, I do not thereby deny the legitimacy of the rational method."[4] *(Irrationalismus,* p. 2). "Since I recognize knowledge as, in antithesis to intellectualism, a relation between subject and object, which ends in action or doing, it is natural to regard my doctrine as a form of pragmatism. . . But I am far from holding that every thought that has incidentally useful results, is true in any absolute sense" (p. 39).[5] The German mind being naturally introspective, we are not surprised that in the end M. F.'s pragmatism is so "Straight" that it leans, like the Scotchman's tree, a little the other way, toward intellectualism, if not intuitionalism. "The concept IRRATIONAL must here as everywhere denote something seen in art and religion. . . Man upon the transcendent plane can create an extension of the always very fragmentary world of experience, a super-world of experience, a super-world *(Ueberwelt)*, through which alone the earthly world acquires worth and meaning. Thus it is not unreality, but super-reality. Its realm is divine, in short religion" (p. 219).

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[3] His two works dealing directly with the subject under consideration here are: "IRRATIONALISMUS, Umrisse einer Erkenntnislehre, Leipzig, 1923 and METAPHYSIK des Irrationalen, 1926. Other works: **Persoenlichkeit und Weltanschauung; Das Denken und die Phantasie; Psychologie der Religion.**

[4] "Das eben ist mit **Irrationalismus** als Erkenntnislehre gemeint: dass es gilt, nicht blos das rationale Denken, sondern alle übrigen Erkenntnismöglichkeiten in ihrer Bedeutung zu würdigen und nicht in deren Unterdrückung, sondern in ihrer harmonischen Zusammenarbeit mit der Ratio das Ideal des Erkennens zu finden" (p. 4).

We are told that the sanctions and categories of religion are profoundly real, whether subjectively phenomenal, or objectively true. In faith the spirit turns toward a transcendent extension of the world of experience. Hence we can speak of religious knowledge. What is said about personality, the ego, the self, is refreshing, though the author does not state definitely his view of the self.

With his equivocal view of the soul we need not expect much of value for our subject. And yet all knowledge is conditioned by the Ego, which is the determining agent. "It is a proof of the inadequacy of all intellectualistic, idealistic systems that philosophers themselves feel that the ultimate realities cannot be reached by purely logical concepts and that they openly avail themselves of the non-rational *(irrationalen)* possibilities of language. All great philosophers at the height of their system-building, have suddenly reversed themselves and turned to other methods" (p. 287). This may be true of Kant, Schelling and others but it certainly is not true of all. It does not matter here except to note the insinuation that all great philosophers finally abandon their systems.

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[5] M. F.'s general position is indicated in the following: "Von den Formen des Pragmatismus, wie er zu gleicher Zeit bei James, Schiller, Dewey, Jerusalem und anderen entwickelt ist, steht meinen Anschauungen die jenige am nächsten, die Goethe vertrat, und Z. B. Simmel am besten in seinem Goethebuch entwickelt hat. Ausser Goethe ist für mich besonders Nietzsche anregend gewesen, vor allem durch seine Nachlasswerke" (p. 44).

It would appear that if systems have come to naught, Irrationalismus as pragmatism is not more satisfactory. We read: "Irrationalismus must allow that it is no universally valid system and never can be, in which the whole world may be caught as in a mouse trap" (p. 289). Unlike rationalism, says M. F., it does not develop its thesis *ad absurdum.*

We turn from this kind of Irrationalismus to one of an entirely different character.

D. SUPER-RATIONALISM (DER IRRATIONALISMUS) AS TRANSCENDENTALISM

Professor Brunner in seeking to justify the Barthian Yonside theology enters into a subtle line of proof against the whole humanistic, pragmatic, immanent epistemology and philosophy. Having shown the relation of revelation, logos, and faith, he proceeds as follows: "Naturally, the preceding account of the logos in faith is opposed by the historical-psychological and romantic schools as rationalism. The fear, however, of a new rationalism is imaginary; but for a correct understanding of the logos as something beyond the merely logical in us a further explanation is necessary. No one has as much need to fear the danger of rationalism as he who has at heart the immediacy and originality of faith. . . Nothing is more justifiable than the effort to establish the super-rational character of faith, over against rationalistic criticism. Nothing is more necessary than to keep alive the opposition to a 'rationalizing of religion' and to show that faith is not something that can be taught" *(EEuG,* p. 115).

1. *How Can Faith Be Justified?*

The fundamental question being how can faith be justified over against those who question its objectivity, it is proper to state "that it was the worst conceivable service one could render to attempt to take faith out of the realm of the super-rational and to seek it in the biological, sub-conscious, emotional, volitional and semi-mystical. The super-rationality of faith is to be found, not in the absence, but in the realization of the laws of the inquiring spirit, the spiritual as such. It is not miraculous, in so far as it is unconscious, but in so far as it is first of all the complete consciousness."

In scientific and philosophical thought, preeminently in creative thought, the super-rational, the underived, the ultimate of logic, play a prominent part. All thought begins with the super-rational, that which is assumed as true but incapable of proof. "It is the paradox of spirit, ———not of the non-spiritual———that a personality is so much richer in proportion as it accepts the universally valid instead of the merely concrete and limited. . . It is the spirit, thought alone, that produces things. . . Here lies the greatest need of the super-rational." What is thought but a strife between the licit and the illicit, the true and the false? Hence the temptation to regard the law of contradiction the fundamental law of thought.

Not outside of, but within thought, do we meet the super-rational, without which we cannot conceive of faith. Faith, however, is not thinking or reflection. It is rather, says Brunner, employing the language of

Kierkegaard, a "double reflection" *(doppolte Reflection).* In all deep thought there is a striving to render clear to one's self truths at first vaguely grasped, but emerging finally in consciousness in a form no longer subject to doubt. Here the groping after truth and its discovery meet. "That super-rational datum, that a truth is suspected because it is already recognized as such, and that one's feeling of discovery is accompanied by pleasure, as if the discoverer were a prophet," may not be ignored. Truly reproductive thinking is not one-sidedly rationalistic, or intellectualistic, but at bottom super-rational.[6]

"The deliverance of the practical reason (Kant) is valid over every other, because it and it alone gives meaning to life as a whole." Nothing of this is found in experience. The categorical imperative lies deeper, in a region not discerned empirically, but in a quite different region. Truth and reality are found in the latter sphere." It is this super-rational element which constitutes nothing less than proof (so called) of revelation, and yet he who knows what revelation is needs no proof.[7]

2. *Not A Rationalizing Of The Highest*

If this be a "rationalizing of the Highest," says Brunner, then the Bible is the original source of rationalism, and the prophets and apostles were the most consistent rationalists. They were concerned about nothing but the Word. The Word is the beginning and the end of Biblical revelation. How regarding the super-rational?

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[6] "Das wichtigste am Denken, die Denkrichtung, ist etwas Irrationales ...Es ist unverkennbar, dass 'alle Philosophie, die sich selbst versteht,' in die Nähe Gottes führt, aber es ist ebenso unverkennbar, dass sie selbst diesen letzten Schritt nicht tun kann" (EEuG. p. 120).

[7] "Die Lust zum Beweisen vergeht jedem der weiss was Offenbarung meint...Offenbarung wäre nicht das Wort von jenseites, wenn nicht, erst recht, das Gericht, das das Gesetz über uns ausspricht, bestätigte und erfüllte" (p. 122).

You ask. Is there anything more super-rational than the creating, revealing Word?[8]

In this connection Brunner comments on R. Otto's Numinous thus: "With him the numinous stands in no, or at most only in reverse, relation to that which he calls the rational content of religious representations."[9]

Referring to the nature of the unfathomable personalities of God and man, Brunner remarks that "the spiritual must be construed as real and the real as spiritual. In this super-rationality of spirit-existence the image of God in man inheres. In maintaining this twofoldedness, in the humble reverent relation to the Spirit-Beyond, there exists at once the spiritual and the super-rational character of faith." See below the exact language of this significant and profound statement showing clearly one aspect of the Barthian transcendentalism.[10]

In short, says Brunner, faith has to do, not with thought and experience, but with the Word of God, functioning in the super-rational (transcendental) manner just described. Contemporaneous thought, dominated by humanism and a false philosophy, cannot fathom the mystery of the transcendental and supernatural.

It must be allowed, that whatever one may think of some phases of Barthianism, it has at this point made a valuable contribution to the theological problem of the genesis of faith and of its reality over against the Feuerbach (and quite general) sophism that it is nothing but imagination.[11]

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[8] "Die Offenbarung Gottes in Christus ist die Erfüllung des Vernunft-Gesetzes, aber gerade darum das was über unserem Gesetzbestimmten Erkennen steht, der Ursprung selbst, das Wort aller Worte, etc."

[9] According to Otto, Brunner proceeds: "The rational and the super-rational stand alongside of each other in equally valid and reciprocally indifferent elements of the total religious experience. This contradicts both the historical documents and the unity of spirit. The super-rational (**das Irrationale**) must be viewed rather as exponent of the content of revelation (**als Exponent der inhaltlichen Offenbarung**). Otherwise it would not be God as God who reveals himself, but God in so far as he is human, God as NOT-GOD" (p. 123).

[10] "In diesem Irrationalen der Geist-Existenz besteht unsere Gottesebenbildlichkeit. In dem Festhalten dieses Doppelten, in dem demütig ehrfürchtigen Sichbeziehen auf den Geist-jenseits besteht zugleich der geistlige und der irrationale Character des Glaubens" (p. 125).

E. Super-Rationalism (Der Irrationalismus) As The Holy And Numinous

A theory somewhat similar to Brunner's is that of Rudolph Otto, who in several books traverses the field of the super-rational.[12]

1. *The Rational and the Super-Rational*

Otto in these works discusses the problems of theological epistemology, and the philosophy of religion and undermines the current pragmatism, behaviorism, new humanism, and auto-soterism. Otto distinguishes between the rational *(das Rationale)* and the super-Rational *(das Irrationale).* Under the latter are transcendental elements indefinable by and unknowable to reason, but intuitively accepted. To denote the transcendence of God, Otto has coined from the Latin *Numen* (God, deity) the word *Numinous (Numinose).* This feeling of the hiddenness, remoteness and transcendence of God awakens in us a holy fear (*Grauen)*, a *mysterium tremendum,* "awful mystery." God is accordingly the "Wholly Other," though not quite in the Barthian sense. This leads to Otto's idea of the "the Holy," containing both rational and super-rational elements, springing from an *a priori* category.

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[11] "Faith transcends both mystic immanence and gnostic transcendence. It reaches out beyond the embodiment of the divine in the subjective as in the objective, in romantic psychologism and in intellectualistic rationalism....Faith seizes that which lies beyond all empirical possibilities [a transcendentalism from the Yonside, which Kant could not reach because his transcendentalism was from the This Side]...In this paradox nothing else comes to expression than the primal mystery, the super-rational, that the Spirit subsists, that here thought and reality are the same, that in the matter of spirit-existence, we have to do, not with ideas, but with the fact that all ideas point to an ultimate Real (**ein letztes Reale**)...a personality who is not merely thought of, but with whom we can intelligently come into vital union" (p. 129).

[12] **Das Heilige.** Ueber das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen, 1923. **Aufsaetze das Numinose Betreffend, 1923.** We designate these as I and II respectively.

The first section of Otto's *Das Heilige* is entitled *"Rational und Irrational,"* which his translator, J. W. Harvey, renders *"The Rational and the Non-Rational."* As Otto himself uses the words constantly and refers to their use by others, he is perplexed as to the exact force of *irrational* (German). "The non-rational is sought over the most widely different regions, and writers shirk the trouble of putting down precisely what they intend by the term, giving it the most multifarious meanings or applying it with such vague generality that it admits of the most diverse interpretations." The empirical in contrast to reason, the psychological in contrast to transcendental fact, that which is kown *a posteriori* in contrast to that which is determinable *a priori,* impulse and the obscure forces of the sub-conscious in contrast to reflection and an intelligible plan, mystical depths, intuition, prophecy and 'occult powers'—"all these and more may claim the names non-rational, irrational and according to circumstances are extolled or condemned as modern irrationalism" (p. 60). Harvey prefers non-rational for the German *irrational.* It would seem, however, that strictly its theological import is *super-rational* as the equivalent of the *transcendental,* both terms denoting that which man accepts either intuitively or logically as true but cannot analyze, something which in brief is either scientific belief or Christian faith.

Otto evaluates the *a priori* and *a posteriori,* the intuitive and the experimental factors in religion with a firm grasp and finds hidden deep in the recesses of man's nature mingled feelings of the attractive, frightful, horrible and reverential. Such feelings are aroused by nature, works of art, meditation, silence and darkness. As man is composed of body and soul, an outer and an inner life, so religion, though a matter of the spirit, ministers to both the temporal and the eternal welfare of man.

2. *The Wholly Other of Chrysostom*

Referring to a sermon by Chrysostom on the incomprehensible God, Otto argues that the deepest impressions in true religion are of a hidden, mysterious character. The *mysterium stupendum* glides over into the *mysterium tremendum,* and into the idea of divine majesty; instead of incomprehensibility one could speak of the *Numen* and *Numinous.* An equally striking proof of his theory Otto finds in Augustine, who relates in the *Confessions,* how in his twentieth year studying Aristotle's categories he sought in vain to subsume God under them and was convinced that God is transcendent. In his deeper experience he looked in upon his "inner self" and only then found the "wholly Other," the marvellous light "above my mind's eye, above every human mind or earthly light."

Otto like Barth makes much of the "Wholly Other," but in a broader sense, so broad in fact as to imply practically its occurrence all over the world, which naturally cannot be used as a specific argument, for the transcendent God of Scripture, as Barth urges. Thus, something like the numinous is found in religions other than the Christian, as Japanese, Egyptian, Hindoo. Passages are quoted from the Upanishads bordering on the numinous and the "wholly Other."

In its lowest form the numinous does not imply personality in the *numen,* as in a crude mysticism. But the striving in mysticism is intelligible, if it be defined as a wholly one-sided emphasis on the super-rational in religious feeling. We have a twofoldness in the idea of the divine, a kind of antinomy, which may arise from greater rational or super-rational elements. The "wholly Other" of the numinous defies all analysis. In the higher form personalism is implied.

Otto finds the strongest proof in Scripture, from Jacob to the latest prophets and the New Testament. Jacob's vision at Bethel: "And he was afraid and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God and this is the gate of heaven." (Gen. 28:17). Again, Amos 6:10: "hold thy peace for we may not mention the name of Jehovah." Also 8:3; Zeph. 1:7; Hab. 2:20. All these passages, and others says Otto, imply the idea of the numinous and transcendent.[13] In the greatest of the prophets, Isaiah, Otto discovers remarkable proof of God's presence in the soul. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory," 6:3. Jehovah is the Holy One of Israel, the true and living God. Is. 5:6; Ezek. 1 and 2, and Is. 31:3.

Otto differs from Barth and Brunner in retaining the word intuition, a direct seeing, a fundamental, self-authenticating datum. He also accepts the Biblical distinction between soul and spirit, nephesh and ruach, psyche and pneuma and states correctily that in Scripture the antithesis is not soul and body, but spirit and flesh.

Otto on Knowing and Believing. I know that my Redeemer liveth and I believe in the resurrection of Christ. Knowing and believing do not exclude each other as

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[13] God transcends not only time and space, measure and number, but all the categories of thought. "We sought the super-rational in the idea of the divine and found it in the numinous, and having found it here, it becomes clear that rationalistic speculation conceals God in God. God is the Absolute Reason, the personal independent Spirit, but he is primarily the wholly Super-Rational, the 'wholly Other,' the complete mystery."

Barth and Brunner teach. "The former knowing," says Otto, "is not the knowing of theoretical science, which rests on empirical experience, but it is a faith-experience. These two kinds of knowledge are radically different. Faith-knowledge does not rest on the evidence of the senses, but is according to Scripture and a safe epistemology, 'the certainty of things not seen,' that is not seen by the natural eye," (II, p. 159). We see mental truths mentally. The transition to a seeing of spiritual things spiritually is obvious.[14]

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[14] —A physicist, writing in the New York **Times** affirms that "the failure of Einstein's insight into the **transcendental laws of nature**" has had unfortunate consequences. Theo. Odenwald points out that according to Rickert, the theoretical implies a non-theoretical, in fact a super-theoretical, a zone in which two worlds, faith and knowledge, interpenetrate (**Protestantische Theologie**).

CHAPTER XV

INADEQUACY OF THE BARTHIAN DUALISM AND TRANSCENDENTALISM

A. The Crisis Theology Not Wholly New

Is the crisis Theology absolutely new? Karl Barth was a pupil of W. Herrmann and Brunner began as a Ritschlian, "as most of us did" *(TC.* p. 7). This implies much. As young men, Barth and Brunner, could not avoid being influenced by such system-builders as Ritschl, Tröltsch, Hermann, Cohen and Natorp, and so Barthianism in some fundamental points is not absolutely original. It has an infusion of Ritschlian value-judgments and of the Neo-Kantian antithesis of faith and knowledge. It poses as a Reformation theology but in its doctrine of God and of faith, it undermines the Heidelberg Catechism.

1. *Stephan and Brunner*

Some years ago, a Halle professor, Horst Stephan, published an elaborate review of Brunner's work, "*Die Mystik,*" affirming that a work (1892), by W. Löw, now a Barthian and frequent contributor to *Zwischen d. Z.* written from the Herrmann viewpoint, anticipated Brunner's book *(präludiert ihn).* Barthianism is a kind of eclecticism.[1] Though Barth in the Dogmatics rarely refers to Ritschl, Stephan holds that the affinity between the Ritschlian and the dialectic theology is evident. Both urge a return to the Biblical Reformation piety and to faith as a divine gift, emanating from a transcendent God. There is a philosophical relationship between the two systems. Ritschl was originally an avowed Neo-Kantian; also Herrmann. Though Brunner rejects idealism he nowhere states definitely his own philosophical position.

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[1] **Zeitschrift fuer Theologie und Kirche**, 1925, pp. 159–215; Brunner's reply, pp. 266–277; Stephan's rejoiner, pp. 278–285. Stephan is editor of the quarterly.

The Kantian philosophy lent itself more than any other to the doctrine of divine transcendence, but the critical philosophy, in its Neo-Kantian form, endangers a proper conception of the gospel as a record of revelation. Stephan holds that Brunner's dogma of the absolutistic transcendence of God and of the unbridgeableness of the chasm between God and man relegates all religious conceptions to the Yonside, leaving nothing of worth in man. That Christian faith directs its eye on reality and inquires into God's revelation in nature, conscience and history, of this we find little in Brunner despite Paul, says Stephan. Moreover, the use of words in a sense different from that of traditional theology is a source of confusion.

According to Stephan, Brunner cannot escape contradicting himself, for when he derives 'ethical worth' from above does he not recognize a super-historical factor in history or man? But if in the history of man, then obviously in the history of mankind. The contradiction lies in the dualism between the Yonside and the Thisside, time and eternity, history and not history, Bible and not Bible.

2. *Wehrung On The Super-Rational*

That the super-rational in one form or another is the presupposition in both science and theology is coming to be more and more recognized in centers of theological thought.[2] American critics may not always use the lumbering German words, preferring the English 'presupposition' or even 'religious a priori,' but a somewhat similar idea crops out, or there could be no start. Recently Dr. G. Wehrung, of Münster, published an elaborate article on "*The Super-Rational*" which may be taken as reflecting current thought in German universities.[3]. The ground of truth, says Wehrung, does not lie in the cognizing subject, but above and beyond it. Where? In the tran-rational, to which the rational is subordinate. When science recognizes the fundamental logical categories, as it must, it tacitly recognizes something above and beyond it as the ground and source of such categories. Kant saw the transcendental, but he failed to take possession of the Promised Land. Here Barth and Barthians advance beyond Kant and plant themselves upon the solid rock of *a priori* truth, or the transcendental. The old writers called it faith, the substance of things unseen (physically).

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[2] This is seen in D. C. Mackintosh's "Theology as an Empirical Science" and J. Baillie's "The Interpretation of Religion." The former speaks of "a pre-scientific experience of the object," the latter says, "The religious a priori has again made its bow to the theological public."

But can the dialectic theology find a lodgment in man for such transcendental? If, according to Barth, man has no capacity for the infinite, we are still in the Kantian dilemma of not being able to reach ultimate truth or reality. "It is an out-and-out transcendence with no trace of immanence". Despite Barth's plea, says Wehrung, we cannot find a safe basis in the No. We live in the Yes, the positive and definite. "What kind of a Yes is required? One that can be dialectically abstracted from an immanent? No. In that case the super-rational would be dissolved. The dialectician in Barth appears to have played a trick on the theologian. Logical dialectics and the real dialectics of God's relation to man are two different things. Confusion here leads to a dialectical dissipation of history" (p. 496).

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[3] **Vom Irrationalen,** Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie, 1923, pp. 482–519. Wehrung is one of the editors.

Augustine asks in the introduction to the *Confessions,* whether calling on God or knowing him comes first. The answer is that neither is possible without the other. Therefore, says Wehrung, the Barthian exclusion of all activity of reason renders religion a poor service. There is here an epistemological question of supreme import.[4] How is the religious *a priori* mediated? How does the super-rational reach us, or we it? Unless Barthians have a solid basis for their transcendental their major premise is illicit and void, and Christianity is on no more solid foundation than heretofore.

3. *Neo-Kantianism and Barthianism*

Frequent reference having been made to the influence of Neo-Kantianism on Barthianism, the reader ought to understand the real character of this philosophy, scarcely ever heard of in this country but of wide-spread influence in Europe. Its chief center is Marburg, where today courses on Barthianism are offered. Its aim originally was to adapt the Kantian philosophy to modern conditions. It included two mutually exclusive principles: the acceptance of a priori truths and the limitation of knowledge to experience. It leans toward the empirical rather than the rationalistic side of Kantism. There are accordingly both Transcendental and empirical elements.[5] The founder of the school and some of the adherents resolve the whole corporeal world into mere appearance. It is this phase of Neo-Kantianism which crops out in

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[4] Wehrung continues: "Das höchste Irrationale bedeutet gleichzeitig die Erfüllung dessen, was in der religiösen Vernunft nach Antwort und Klärung ruft, und das Zerbrechen aller menschlichen Vernunft. Gerade in dieser Doppelfunktion erweist es sich als die endgültige Bürgschaft auch der innervernünftigen apriorischen Tendenzen."

[5] The school was founded about 1865 by F. A. Lange and has included philosophers of such widely different views as Vaihinger, Volkert, Paulsen, Natorp, Cohen, Kinkel and Cassier. At one extreme is Schuppe, at the other Wundt.

Barthianism and leads to the untenable view that reason cannot reach certitude in anything, least of all in religion. The Barthian corollary is that only faith, which is transcendental, can guarantee truth and certitude. The reader must again be reminded that according to the dialectic theology, reason and faith are opposites. This fallacy was exposed above where it was shown that Brunner employs reason to refute reason and to establish the Christian faith. It is because protestantism has lost faith in its faith that Barth and Brunner come to its defence with all the resources of reason.

Lange, like Comte, having an aversion to metaphysics and the transcendental, taught a positivistic philosophy, holding that only the inductive method is valid and that all knowledge is relative. Here again, Barthianism, which spurns all subjectivism, has fallen into the trap of positivism and relativism. Cohen, Natorp and others of the school sought to neutralize the Comtean tendency by swinging over to a transcendental position. Thus the Marburg scheme has been called "Half-Kantianism," or a "bifurcated philosophy," with two contradictory principles. Whether Barth, Brunner, Gogarten, and Thurneysen are or are not directly indebted to Neo-Kantianism, it is nevertheless a fact that their system has the same irreconcilable elements of absoluteness and relativism, transcendentalism and phenomenalism, and faith versus reason. What John Lindsay says of Neo-Kantianism may be said of Barthianism: It has faith, but cannot know that there is a God.[6]

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[6] "Neo-Kantianism lands itself in an unfortunate dilemma, for it says practically that we know that there is infinite knowledge and that there are ideas but that we with our finite, discursive thought can never reach them; the serious practical result of which would seem to be that object and knowledge, form and content, being-in-itself and culture-consciousness, never do, in N-K come together in their proper mode" (J. Lindsay, in **Encyclopedia Relig. and Ethics**).

4. *Theology and Scientific Method*

Barthianism holds that whenever theology accepts the principles and methods of science it cuts its own throat. Science is human, empirical, naturalistic and often atheistic; Christianity implies "the self-communication of the transcendent and super-rational God" (Brunner, *TC.* p. 4). Theology therefore pursues its own course, growing out of the revelation in Jesus Christ and all involved therein. "We shall have to be either scientific or Christian" (Brunner). Let us see.

(1). The Terms Science and Scientific

Science may be understood in the sense of a systematic arrangement of facts, or briefly, the inductive method. In this sense theology may be said to be scientific, for it seeks the facts, and all the facts. But the term has come to denote a world-view essentially naturalistic; the cosmos is viewed, not as a creation of the God of Scripture, but as an eternal evolution according to natural law. In this sense theology is not and cannot be scientific, for it is through and through super-naturalistic. Logically, there is here 'a false distribution,' the terms being employed in two contradictory senses. Science has caused the confusion by arrogating to itself philosophy and theology. Theology is, therefore, scientific, if the term be employed in its original and proper sense.

(2). Theology and Science

In the above-mentioned "*Zeitschrift f. Sys. Theologie,*" a Rostock professor, Dr. F. Büchsel, discusses the "The Place of Theology in the System of Sciences" in a review of P. Tillich's book on a similar subject. As both Tillich's book and Büchsel's criticism have a bearing on Barthianism, we reproduce a summary of views. Tillich holds that (1) theology ought not to place itself on a line with science, but assert its independence, and (2) yet theology ought not to limit itself to a circumscribed field, but cooperate in all fields of science. "Religion covers every phase of life. If theology aims to do justice to religion, it must face all questions both of life and of the science of spirit. Scientists and philosophers do not hesitate to express views on religion and theology. Since science is no longer pure science but philosophy and metphysics and seeks to undermine theology and Christianity from the new angle, theology must defend itself from this side or lose its contentions. The fact is that theology has always had a metaphysical basis and is metaphysics through and through, as is also the background of religion."[7] Büchsel agrees with Tillich that since writers on philosophy are disposed to enlighten theologians on theological matters, theologians might well look thoroughly into the metaphysical aspects of theology.

"In so far as Tillich accepts the Absolute, the Unconditioned, he establishes a connecting link between theology and intellectual science. Since both have a common ground in metaphysics they may not be separated." But theology has more to say about God than that he is Absolute; and as a matter of fact, men gave up the absoluteness of God and then the absoluteness of Christianity and today "a materialistic atheism in the name of science has corrupted university circles and then the masses." Büchsel charges that this state of affairs is due partly to the indifference of theology and the inroads of the Neo-Kantian philosophy.[8] Since confusion reigns in all the sciences, theology can gain little aid from any of them, but must use all well established facts or be regarded as narrow. Both Neo-Kantianism and Barthians have caused havoc "among the German people" by failing to recognize the connection between science and our thoughts about God.

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[7] As Spengler says, above: "Religion is first and last metaphysics, other-worldliness (Jenseitigkeit), awareness in a world of which the evidence of the senses merely lights the foreground."

[8] "Dass die Wissenschaft diese Verwüstungen im deutschen Volke angerichtet hat, wird niemand wundern, der weiss, dass die Theologie ihr den Weg dazu offen gelassen hat, indem sie den Zusammenhang zwischen den Grundbegriffen der Wissenschaft und dem Gottesgedanken preisgab. Die

B. Is a Barthian Theology Possible?

Can there be a Barthian theology? Yes, No. No, Yes. As usually defined, theology is the science of God. But as science treats of facts, and as God is alleged to be unknown even though revealed in Christ, Barthian theology obviously can not be a science in the accepted sense of the term. Barth accordingly defines theology as "a service rendered at a definite time and place by an adequately equipped man in the interest of God's revelation." The dilemma of theology is to present truths that as a human and finite science it cannot understand, much less expound. No man, no theological professor, but God only, can answer the questions of supreme import for man. Therefore one must revert to paradox and dialectics.[9]

1. Theology Merely Prolegomenon (Barth).

Since revelation takes place in eternity, and theology is cultivated in time (two disparates), theology is possible only if revelation and theology are contemporaneous, which they are not, nor can be. If it be objected that

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neukantische Theologie hat Jahrzehnte Zeit gehabt ihren Einfluss zu entfalten. Diese traurige Entwicklung zu verhindern, hat sie nicht vermocht" (p. 403).

[9] "Zwischen Gottes ebenfalls in einem bestimmten **Hic et Nunc** gegebener Offenbarung und der Theologie steht zunächst trennend die **Zeit.** Um Gegenstand der Theologie werden zu können, muss die Offenbarung der Theologie gleichzeitig werden....Dass es keine Theologie gibt ohne die Unmittelbarkeit des ewigen allgegenwärtigen Wortes und Geistes...das kann nichts daran ändern" (**Zwischen d. Zeiten, 1926,** p. 21).

Scripture is revelation, the answer is that Scripture, as such, unless conceived as latently containing a transcendental element, is merely a human book like any other. Therefore there can be no theology in the usual sense.

But, wait, says Barth, there is after all a true theology, it is written by God in eternity; not by man in time. And the difference is world-wide. Over against the view that history and God, history and revelation go together we are told that "he who says history, says thereby No-Revelation" *(Nicht Offenbarung)*. Revelation is so far above man and history that it is super-historical, super-rational, transcendental. Church and theology sustain a reciprocal relation, says Barth.[10] There is authority in the Church. Barth distinguishes between the immediate authority of Christ and of Revelation and the mediate authority of the Church.

In any event, theology at best is merely *prolegomenon*, not the absolute theology demanded by Barthians. It speaks in a preliminary way of that which in the end God must and will say. In this connection Barth pays his respects to certain critics: Heinzelmann, Althaus, Schäder, Lüttge. Whether one proceeds from the idea of "historical reality," or that man's faith is nil, or that the "dialectical" theology is no theology, matters not, for the issues lie deeper. "I miss in my critics the consideration that our knowledge and comprehension of God is really merely patchwork, that we have not the resources to reach absolutely satisfactory conclusions concerning God." Barth challenges them to go to rock-bottom instead of picking flaws as to method. Barth's statement elsewhere and repeated in the article under review calls forth the following from Heinzelmann: "Who does not see in what a terrible dilemma Barth is enmeshed?... Is this not an admission of complete perplexity in theology on the part of a man professing to be a Christian theologian?" Barth doubts whether Heinzelmann realizes the deplorable condition in which theology finds itself today.[11]

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[10] The appearance of Peterson's "What is Theology?" in 1925, afforded Karl Barth and Adolf Bultmann an opportunity to state their views on this subject. By a skilful use of the dialectic method, and their peculiar interpretation of revelation and the Church, they make out a more or less consistent theory of theology. **Literature**: Eric Peterson: **Was ist Theologie?**; K. Barth, "**Kirche und Theologie**"; A. Bultmann, "**Die Frage der Dialektischen Theologie.**" The latter two articles are in Zwischen d. Zeiten, 1926, pp. 18–39, 40–59, respectively, and, though written independently of each other agree remarkably. Bultmann's acute analysis of the scope and cogency of the dialectic method is the best that has come under our notice.

On the impossibility of theology in the accepted sense Bultmann agrees with Barth. The answer to the question, What is Theology? (45), is that there is theology only when there is a speaking of the revelation of God as an eternal happening, and that naturally there is no theology which speaks of God only in general terms, or professes to speak in the place of God. Every such theology is man-derived and worthless. In other words God is unknown, so transcendentally remote, that neither logic, science nor any human expedient, least of all the New Humanism, can reach him. But he reaches us in an eternal, non-temporal revelation, as the dialectic method through question and answer, affirmation and negation clearly shows.[12]

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[11] Then follows the original of which an abstract was given above: "Die sogenannte Barthische Theologie wird eines Tages gehen, wie sie gekommen ist, und ihr wird ihr Recht geschehen. Aber dieses weiss ich bestimmt: 'Es sei denn, dass meine Kritiker aus schwererer Not, aus grösserer Ratlosigkeit als die meine gegen mich reden werden, werden sie trotz ihrer Kunst, Gelehrsamkeit und Frömmigkeit die Leute nicht sein, 'den Weg nach vorn' zu entdecken und zu gehen. Das berühmte '**Korrektiv**' haben sie sich alle noch nicht recht zu Herzen genommen. Bekümmerter würden sie sonst reden" (p. 36).

[12] "Eben deshalb (weil nur die Offenbarung selber letzthin das eigentliche Wesen der Theologie bestimmt) gibt es anderwärts keine Theologie, d.h. kein Reden auf Grund von Offenbarung und Gehorsam" (55).

2. *Barthian Theology Technically No System (Brunner)*

Agreeing with Barth, though proceeding more cautiously, Emil Brunner affirms that theology is neither historical, systematic, nor philosophical, but primarily Biblical, polemical and dialectic. Systematic theology implies logical procedure. "In this sense true theology can never be a science, because it does not recognize the supreme law of science, namely reason as the final arbiter. To shatter the axioms of reason is essentially the task in which theology, as servant of the word of God is involved.[13] Theological polemics is directed above all against the supremacy of reason."

Brunner, however, is embarrassed, for "an understanding of the word God implies reason" and so polemical theology must appeal to *reason* to refute *reason.* It is an awkward dilemma and Brunner labors through some twenty pages to extricate himself. He allows that reason and revelation are at bottom "a pure antithesis, yea possibly in themselves no antithesis." The antithesis arises when "reason will not submit to its master, but strives to become master, God himself." When the Word of God is effective in faith the real, the higher reason, overcomes the lower. The task of theology, therefore, is through the word of God to expose the illusions of reason and to point out its fulfilment in the Logos of God. "This is the province of Apologetics, but not of the old apologetics, which laid down certain doctrines, but of the new dialectic apologetics, which weighs the yes and the no, the no and the yes, and which mixes with the old as fire and water."

The Brunner apologetics holds that "man in the presence of God is always in error. Theology is ever an assault upon, not a defence, of man." Theology is also polemical, necessarily. "A real sermon is always polemical, not in the Pharisaical sense of attacking *others*, but in defending our own position." There being, however, objection to the word polemical, Brunner prefers the term *Eristic (erizein,* to contend), disputation, the object of which is to show how through the word of God "the human reason is disclosed as a source of fatal error and on the other hand finds a fulfilment of its own fruitless search." But here again, faith seems to be bolstered up by reason and we after all have reason on our hands. In short, Brunner cannot get along with reason and he cannot get along without it, and so he strives through the next eighteen pages to adjust matters.

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[13] "Weil sie [die Theologie] das oberste Gesetz dieser Wissenschaft nicht anerkennt: die Vernunft als letzte Instanz in der Wahrheitsfrage" (Die Andere Aufgabe der Theologie, Z. d. Z., 1929, p. 256).

We are told that it was the weakness of the old apologetics that it stood on the ground of the opponent. In place of this, the Barthian apologetics plants itself on the word of God and argues or pleads therefrom. At this point Brunner concedes that unless man sought God there could be no redemption, in direct opposition to Barth's contention that man does not want to come to God.[14] From time immemorial, says Brunner, man struggled between two contradictory world-views: the idealistic, ending in mysticism and the naturalistic, ending in materialism. Neither can overcome the other, for each has an element of truth. "The eristic theology may, indeed must, play the one against the other, in order to show why on the basis of theory a decision is impossible...It must concede relative worth to each." We regard this position as approximately correct. But it is not clear how Brunner resolves the antithesis, for on Barthian premises neither epistemology nor metaphysics can enter this field, much less solve its problems. He seems to find the key in God's speaking to us, *deus dixit,* transcendentally. "Existence would not be a question, if we had not part in the word of God. Only because we are in God and know about God *(nur weil wir in Gott sind und um Gott wissen, können wir nach ihm fragen)* can we inquire about him" (263). It is a question what this being "in God" means. Even if the reference be to "In him we live and move and have our being," nothing bearing on the subject is explained. Man, even though fallen, says Brunner, bears the image of God. Under this construction, man has "capacity" *(capax)* not only for God, but for things pertaining to God.[15]

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[14] Könnte der Mensch nicht nach Gott fragen, so gäbe es für ihn auch keine Erlösung, so wäre er für das Wort Gottes unerreichbar...Der Mensch ist nicht **truncus et lapis**, sondern eben Mensch, und das heisst: ein irgendwie um Gott wissendes Wesen. Sein um Gott wissen ist sein Menschsein, wie entstellt und fragwürdig auch dieses Wissen ist...Alles Menschliche im Unterschied zum Tierischen beruht auf dieser Errinnerung, diesem **a priori** Wissen" (S. 262, 264).

Since the ordinary logic is unable to reconcile the difference of the schools, we are thrown back on the dialectic method. "Theology must be dialectic. For the greatly misunderstood term dialectic one might say that it pictures or describes the contradictions, the inevitable contradictions, the yes and the no, because the word of God touches and must touch the contradictions in man." The task of theology is first of all to come to an understanding within the church itself in order to reach the outer world.[16]

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[15] Brunner has such a high view of man, intellectually, though not morally, that it is difficult to see how he can accept Barth's low view.

[16] Referring to Grisebach's criticism, Brunner deplores that the whole difficulty lies in the fact that one does not understand Barthianism. It is not and cannot be a system, as the term is usually understood, for system implies philosophy and Barthians professedly hate philosophy as they hate Satan, though paradoxically enough their theology, whether apologetic, polemical or eristic, is philosophy. We are therefore forced to the conclusion that Barthianism according to both Barth and Brunner is not, and cannot be a theology, in the technical sense.

C. BARTH-BRUNNER RECONCILIATION BETWEEN FUNDAMENTALISM AND MODERNISM

From the first, the claim has been made that Barthianism not only aims to mediate between rigid orthodoxy and liberalism as found in Germany and Switzerland, and between Fundamentalism and Modernism as found in this country, but, according to its champions, has actually succeeded in laying down principles as tentative basis of reconciliation. If such be really the fact, Barthianism has solved one of the most perplexing of all problems and has earned the lasting gratitude of a hitherto somewhat perplexed, if not divided Protestantism. We propose to inquire into the facts.

1. Barth's Statement of the Crisis and His Proposed Solution

In his writings generally, Barth uses sharp and sometimes un-charitable language in describing the situation in the Church and among ministers. The Church has fallen on evil days. "Ours is an era of pygmies." Gradually people have ceased to regard the Bible in its true light. Materialism, science, false psychology, have undermined doctrine. "And when historical criticism began objecting to the antiquity, the genuineness, the historical reliability of Biblical literature, no one any longer knew the only possible answer—the answer of freedom and reality." But this is no answer. Then began the great misery of protestantism: "Doctrine, parted from its life-giving origin, hardened into *Orthodoxy,* Christian experience, confusing itself with its origin, took refuge in *Pietism;* truth, no longer understood and actually no longer understandable, shriveled into the moral and sentimental maxims of the *Enlightenment;* and finally even Christian experience was reduced in *Schleiermacher* and his followers to the hypothesis of being the highest expression of religious instinct common to all men." These four miseries: rigid orthodoxy, pietism, enlightenment, and Schleiermacherism, are the four corner-stones of the prison in which we live. The roof over this prison which shuts out the light of heaven, is the *denial of revelation.*

2. Brunner On Christianity and Science

In the "Theology of Crisis" Brunner writes: "The rational man [the scientist] assumes a closed universe, as it were, an unbroken *continuum* of truth, etc.," (p. 15). "Over against it [the idea of continuity] stands the thought of *discontinuity* which is basic to every primary doctrine of Christianity. A line of distinction is clearly drawn between God and the world by the concept of creation *ex nihilo.* This dualism is absolutely contradictory to modern monism. . . We shall have to be either scientific or Christian" (pp. 12, 13). This is a fair and comprehensive statement of the problem. How does Brunner solve it? He does not solve it; he merely in the style of Barthianism states the Either Or and lets it go at that. He befogs the whole situation. He nowhere intimates what type of orthodoxy and liberalism, of fundamentalism and modernism is floating around in his mind. Nor does he tell us what *his* Orthodoxy (heterodoxy) or Christianity is. His attitude is destructive, not constructive.

We read: "Fudamentalism conflicts with science exactly because, and in so far as, it is not truly Christian" (p. 14). It is just the other way: In so far as fundamentalism is "truly Christian" it *must* conflict with science, according to Brunner himself as quoted above. *First,* "the concept of creation *ex nihilo*" is directly antithetic to the scientific concept of an *eternal* creation, as shown above (p. 58–9). *Second,* the doctrine of *discon-*

tinuity is directly antithetic to that of *continuity*, from star-dust to man, as held by science. *Third*, according to Brunner, man was created in, and still has God's image (though blurred by sin); according to science man sprang from the amœba and is still an animal (essentially). *Fourth*, if according to Brunner, the dualism between God and man "stands out more boldly in the concept of sin" (p. 12), then again Christianity conflicts with science, for science ridicules the Christian doctrine of sin and substitutes a "fall" upward, a gradual evolution until the true man emerges in Jesus Christ (p. 190). *Fifth*, according to Barth and Brunner Jesus Christ reveals God and atones for the sins of mankind; according to science there is no sin in the Biblical sense and no need of atonement.[17] The proposition is defensible that the issue between Christianity and science (modernism is only a second-hand evolutionism) turns on these five points. Brunner may not "straddle." He must choose between the antithesis: *Entweder-Oder*.

To cap the climax Brunner writes: "Fundamentalism and orthodoxy in general are a petrifaction of Christianity; and modernism and all doctrines of immanence are its dissolution" (p. 14). The latter half of this statement is probably correct; the first part is not. It is possible that some forms of fundamentalism and of orthodoxy are not what they ought to be, but if fundamentalism and orthodoxy be taken to mean, at the lowest limit, an acceptance of the Apostolic and Nicene creeds, as in the historic protestant churches, they are not a petrifaction but a "vitalizing" of Christianity through the crucifixion and risen Christ and the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit.

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[17] Science can find no soul, much less spirit in man, and so all the high talk of Barthians regarding man's hereafter is wide of the mark. Man is an animal and will die as an animal, according to science.

D. INADEQUACY OF THE BARTHIAN DUALISMS

As seen in the preceding pages the crisis theology is a cosmic-eschatological dualism, a transcendentalism grounded in the transcendence of God, the sharp antithesis between God and man, eternity and time.[18]

1. *Eternity and Time*

The qualitative difference between eternity and time, the absoluteness of things eternal, the nothingness of things temporal runs through the whole dialectic theology. "If I have a system, it is the infinite qualitative difference between time and eternity, which in the negative and positive sense is ever kept in mind...If Paul really spoke of something else than the *permanent crisis of time and eternity* I should be led by the text itself to an absurdity." Barthians are on safe ground in holding that the cosmos was created in time, for the idea of an eternal creation is the corner-stone of energetic monism, which does not distinguish between time and eternity (H. Höffding). But they land in a bog in holding that time has no content, that nothing in time counts and that history is the science of relativity. "To the *transcendental* idealism of justification there corresponds the transcendental realism of redemption" (Brunner). "Everything in the sphere of earthly existence and life, all history and man, measured by eternity, are nought" (Gogarten). The chasm between the two eons is too broad and deep to admit of any bridging by man. "But the dialectic theology has thus far failed to supply a satisfactory metaphysics of time to support its contention" (H. W. Schmidt, *op. cit.* p. 186). See, further, pp. 44–9, above).

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[18] "Die Fachsprache nennt Barths und Brunners Theologie einen transzendentalen Dualismus auf eschatologischer Grundlage" (P. Burckhardt, op. cit. p. 16).

2. *The Chasm Between God And Man*

Barth teaches the absoluteness of God. "Can there be anything more astounding than the majestic mystery of this impenetrable and unapproachable, this only free, mighty, Being? Man in sin has no standing in the sight of God. From the potter to the clay, from the workman to the work, there is no bridge." Man is zero, a vessel of wrath. Men are foreordained to sin before the foundation of the world. Sin is the untemporal, *transcendental* disposition of mankind. Sin is not a *fall* of the individual man, but *the fall* which takes place with his life as man. *Finitum non capax infiniti.* The finite has no capacity for the Infinite. The chasm between God and man has not been bridged, even in Christ. The dialectics of time and eternity does not admit of a revelation in a real sense. Man, according to Barth, being "unfree" lacks power to receive a revelation.[19]

Over against this, we hold that man, created in the image of God, is a rational, self-determining agent, whom God approaches as such and holds accountable for the deeds done in this life. Barth's dialectics forbids a real communion between man and his maker. Faith is "unfaith," and is neither "religious," nor "un-religious." The God of Barth is virtually the Absolute of philosophy, without love or pity. "Barth's theology lacks a satisfactory development of the love of God. The personal relation of will to will is displaced by the dialectic relation of the temporal to the eternal" (Althaus). "It is the essence of a person to stand in relation to other persons" (Howison), even though one be infinite, the other finite.

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[19] "The philosophical source of his denial of human freedom is found in Neo-Kantianism. According to Cohen and Natorp, who in this respect follow Kant, the causal principle is all-pervasive in the phenomenal world. Every event in space or time is determined by its relation to other events. Psychical events are as completely determined by their causal connection as are physical events. There can, therefore, be no human freedom in the commonly accepted sense of the term" (A. C. Knudson, **Methodist Review**, July 1928, p. 556). This "naturalistic necessitarianism" undermines man's true personality and makes an end of all religious faith.

Worship of God, clasping of hands, even books on *Romans* (his own included) rest under Barth's damnatory judgment. Pp. 72–5, above.

3. The Paradox Of The Unknown Known and the Known Unknown God

God is unknown and yet the center of theology (Barthian paradox). The absolutely objective, the transcendental, cannot be reached by man (Kant). "Man as Man cannot know God" (Barth). Barth distinguishes sharply between faith and knowledge. If, says Barth, you try to prove the existence of God, by logic you end in agnosticism; I propose to save Christianity from agnosticism by the acceptance of faith as God-derived, eternal, transcendental. God is the pure negation, the negation of negations; the knowledge of God is an "iridescent dream." But "the heavens declare the glory of God, etc." "Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" Nature shows there is a God; we cannot know him "unto perfection"; neither can we know anything "unto perfection," not even the clod under our feet. According to Paul man can know enough of God to be held responsible. "By virtue of his God-like constitution, man is directly receptive of God's self-annunciation and responsive to God's righteous authority" (E. V. Gerhart).

Verbummelt. It is to be deplored that at a time when all the world, business men, ministers, scientists, philosophers, are perplexed concerning God, not merely the Christian doctrine of God, but his very existence, Barth at the real crisis of Christianity should come out with a vague, contradictory, agnostic and utterly impracticable hypothesis; a God of wrath rather than of love. He has *verbummelt* the whole subject. He is weakest at the point where weakness means failure, his doctrine of God.

4. *The Transcendental Bible*

Barth's Verbummelung, bungling of the doctrine of God, is bad enough, but his bungling of the Bible as at once a human book full of errors and contradictions, and yet a transcendental revelation of God, is worse. The proof of this is given elaborately (to forestall dispute) in chapters VII and VIII.

(1). The Bible As The Word Of Man

Barthians teach that the Bible is (a) "an accidental conglomerate of writings," like any other book written by men, P. 98; (b) abounds in mistakes, myths and legends; (c) contains no authentic account of "the life and personality of Jesus" (Bultmann). Barthians teach, further, that (d) the Mosaic age "is wiped out" (Graf, Duhm, Thurneysen); (e) that the fourth gospel cannot be regarded as an "historical source" and so must be thrown overboard (Brunner); that (f) "legends are found in many parts of the synoptic gospels" (Brunner); that (g) it is impossible "to support revelation through any grounds of reason" (Brunner); and that since revelation is a Yonside of knowledge it is (h) "withdrawn from all human means of knowledge" and that accordingly (i) there can be no history of things and events eternal and transcendental, even the resurrection of Christ being trans-historical, "on the border of the unhistorical" *(am Rande des Unhistorischen).*

According to Barth history is of minor value. "What matters it whether figures like Abraham and Moses are products of later myth-making,—believe it who can" (*WGuT*. p. 65)! "Before Abraham was, I am," said Christ. "The history of Jesus is immaterial" (Bultmann). Committed to the Neo-Kantian dualism of faith and knowledge, Barthians have no need of facts or history as long as one has faith, and so Brunner is consistent in denying (over against Gressmann) the historicity of the early chapters of Genesis. He, however, speaks of creation, man made in God's image and the "fall." He fails to offer any reconciliation, of his opposites.[20]

(2). The Bible As The Word Of God

It is shown in the preceding pages, that according to Barth, man, being finite and fallible, cannot understand, much less record things eternal. There is no real history-writing by man, least of all Biblical history. The Bible, to be sure, contains accounts of human happenings, but, "when God enters, history for the while ceases to be and there is nothing more to ask; for something wholly different and new begins" (*WGuT*, p. 37) . . . "God must be all in all." "Matters of faith cannot be settled by historico-scientific methods," for they belong to a transcendental realm. Barth allows that "Scripture is God's Word in virtue of its being grounded in revelation. . . It [revelation] is God's Word without being grounded in another" (*Dog.* I, p. 131). On the other hand Brunner writes: "In itself Scripture is not revelation." Where then do we find revelation? Brunner may not reply that it is through faith, for we know of faith only through

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[20] **Double Meaning of the phrase The Word of God.** There is either carelessness or confusion of thought in the Barthian expression, The Word of God. It usually means Scripture. Barth, however, frequently (e.g. p. 184 above) speaks of Christ as the Word of God. So, too, Brunner (e.g. p. 34, TC). In English one can distinguish between word and Word. Not so in German. The noun is always **Wort**, whether the reference be to Scripture or to Christ. To use the phrase in this two-fold sense is confusing. There is a more serious objection. Christ in Scripture is called the Logos, the Word, but never the Word of God. All this implies vagueness, mysticism, occultism.

Scripture. "We measure reason, every science by the word of God" (*RPET*, p. 76). Which word of God, the Bible as we have it, or the super-Bible, the transcendental Bible of the Barthians? Again, how is "every science," even mathematics, or astronomy, to be measured by the Bible? Moreover, since Brunner accepts the current scientific evolutionism, ought not the Bible to be measured by science?

Brunner writes: "The word of the prophets is not in itself the Word of God; it is merely a word concerning the Word of God" (*TC.* p. 34). Here again is a transcendental something.

It is a singular fact that Barthians make little account of the Bible as the inspired word of God *(theopneustos,* inspired of God, *von Gott eingegeben,* 2 Tim. 3:16), inspired in its original and presumably present form. In the old "Orthodox" doctrine which Barth and Brunner ridicule, the Bible as we have it, is viewed as the inspired word of God. Such was without exception the teaching of Luther, Calvin and other champions of Protestantism. They held "for truth all that God has revealed to us in his word" (Heid. Cat., 21).

Do Barthians really hope to meet the theological and religious "crisis" by their paradox of an unknown and transcendental God and their unreliable and transcendental Bible?

The Scripture Principle. The norm and principle of Christian truth is Scripture. If critics may reject whole chapters and books of Scripture, there would remain conceivably no one definite Bible, but many fragmentary Bibles, no two agreeing. Result: no Bible at all. Whether the Bible *is* the word of God, or contains it, has been, as Brunner says, variously interpreted, but rightly understood both expressions are correct. The true principle is that the Bible, considered as a unit, *is* the word of God, even though it contains words of Satan.[21]

5. God Revealed And Yet Unrevealed In Christ

It must ever be borne in mind that though God does not, cannot, reveal his essence, he reveals enough of his plan to enable man through Christ to attain salvation. Jesus Christ is presented by Barth in two quite different, if not irreconcilable, aspects: as revealing and not revealing God. "The revelation in Jesus..., is the strongest conceivable veiling and unknowableness of God." "In Jesus God becomes a mystery," (p. 134) above. Is there after all a revelation? Is it not a Yes and a No, mostly a No? There is a No from the Yonside. "God were not God if he could not enter the contradiction of our existence" (p. 138), and it might be added, unless man had capacity to receive him. On the person of Christ one finds little in Barth beyond the affirmation that Christ is God and reveals God in a mystery.

Is it true that *Jesus was* "a character wholly negative with no distinctively positive qualities?" (pp. 140). Must we admit that Jesus was "not an historical character, but a mythus?" (p. 139). Biblical history is an attempt "to undertake something in itself impossible," because of its other-worldliness, its transcendence.

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[21] "It is an essential doctrine of the Reformed Churches that the whole Bible is the Word of God. All the contents of the Bible are not of the same dignity or value as a means of grace. Some of the contents utter the Word of God to the Church in the Old Dispensation and under conditions now past. Some parts of the Bible are subordinate in importance to others, but God's Word is one, and it is characteristic of the Reformed doctrine that all differences, such as those between the Old and New Testaments, or between the Law, the Prophets, and the Apostles...have no principial significance accorded to them in the Reformed faith...If, as Barth and Thurneysen are ready to allow, it can be shown that historical criticism can dissolve the Bible...then we think, its nature as a supernatural and divine revelation can no longer be maintained. The Bible is through and through supernaturalistic and claims a supernaturalistic origin" (C. W. Hodge, **The Evangelical Quarterly**, Jan. 1929, pp. 10, 13).

Barth's argumentation on the necessity of the incarnation is acute and convincing; hence all the more surprising is his denial that it intelligibly reveals God. We are greatly disappointed that Barth misses a grand opportunity to show the world that Jesus Christ was really the God-man who tabernacled in the flesh. Under the Barthian negative criticism, Jesus stands no higher than Gautama, for he (Buddha) was at least an historical figure.

In the end Barth concedes that it is not on account of "the relativity of human knowledge," but on account of "the absoluteness of God" that he cannot be revealed. He is too transcendent to be understood. Man originally had capacity, but lost it through sin. "This means that on our side we have no avenue to, nor possibility of understanding God's revelation (p. 150). "There is no human organ for revelation." Man lacks every quality. *"Jede Qualität dazu geht ihm ab"* (*Dog.* I, p. 287). Barth forgets that he had asked, Of what avail is the sun, if we have not eyes? It is all very obscure. According to Barth there was a revelation in Christ, but it does not reveal. It was and is on the Yonside and remains there, for it is too absolute, too remote and transcendental to be received by man, even in faith, for faith is on the Yonside, not on the Thisside. This is poor comfort for a sin-sick soul.

6. The Paradox of Faith

The most remarkable Barthian paradox is that of faith. Faith is at once everything and nothing; it is a reality in eternity, emptiness in time. "The paradox of faith can never be given up" (Barth). "If more than emptiness, it is un-faith, insolence." God works in three dimensions: *God* works; he *works;* he works *in us.* In a few places Barth allows that faith is a knowing, an assent and agrees with Calvin that it is a *unio cum Christo.* He even says that faith is "the knowledge in which we cognize God." Nevertheless it is "a revelation in concealment." "The super-rational *(Das Irrationale)* in man is a reminder of the absolute antithesis." But this super-rational is not to be regarded as the seat of immanence in man, which Barth, as Brunner, fears, would lead to humanism.

Professor Brunner states in the preface of one of his books that the object in the third part "is to restore faith to its full transcendental rank" *(zu seinem vollen transcendentalen* Gewicht). "Faith is not a psychic experience...Its essential mark is the absence of everything psychic." According to Biblical psychology (Delitzsch) man is soul and spirit. The soul is the Ego. Man acts in the unity and oneness of his endowment and so faith, however construed, on the human side, is an act of the whole man, psychical, spiritual, volitional. How can the essence of faith be "the absence of everything psychical?" Nor do we believe that "faith is the purer the emptier it is in itself," *(je leerer er an sich ist").* Faith moves in the sphere of spirit. Psychic implies time. But spiritual life is possible only under the presupposition that time "becomes stationary" *(stillgestellt wird, E. EuG.* p. 101) that it takes place in eternity. In another place Brunner says that "between faith and every other inner happening there is an absolutely unbridgable chasm."

Brunner says that faith is not "trust." This formula "contains a fatal misunderstanding, leading to moralistic platitudes." It is not trust at all but "merely a symbol of the transcendent act of God." On the contrary, according to the Heidelberg Catechism faith is not only a "certain knowledge" *(eine gewisse Erkenntnis)*, but "a hearty trust" *(ein herzliches Vertrauen).*

All that Barth and Brunner write on faith will be utterly unintelligible to the reader unless he recalls the Barthian dualism between eternity and time, God and man, God's absoluteness and man's finiteness, God's sovereignty and man's "unfreedom." "Faith on its positive side is eternally determined, on its negative side, it is a *moment.*" (Brunner, *EEuG.* p. 104). According to Barth faith is a leap "into the dark"..., "Into the unknown." According to the Reformers faith was trust and confidence. Faith was regarded as transcendent because it was a gift of the Holy Spirit, but such faith had content, whereas in Barthianism it is so *transcendental* that it is emptiness.

7. *The Paradox of the Yonside and the Thisside Church*

Barth institutes a sharp contrast between the eternal and the temporal Church. In the Church as divine "a revelation from eternity has taken place... [In the Church as human] "one finds everything and nothing... The Gospel is the dissolution of the Church, the Church the dissolution of the Gospel." What is one to make of such paradoxes? "The Church of Esau is the only possible Church of Jerusalem, Rome, Wittenberg, and Geneva; the Church of Jacob is the impossible Church." By Church Barth means "all those touched by the breath of revelation." Further, "the Church, not the world, has crucified Christ...Must we not pause at the atheism of the Church?" *(bei jenem Atheismus der Kirche, soeben beschrieben, Rbr.* p. 375). "Had not theology and the Church better liquidate? If they have not the courage to liquidate, let not their banality be too conspicuous."

In the *Word of God,* Barth is less severe on the Church than in the *Römerbrief,* but the same antithesis between the Yonside or transcendental and the Thisside or humanistic Church, occurs. The people who go to Church do not get what they want—the word. "Am I not at least partly right when I say that the people are disappointed in us?" Barth lashes the ministers. "We need ministers who take their work *seriously*." "Would it not be better for ministers to read Feuerbach than theological quarterlies?"

Barth's arraignment of the Church would seem to be in conflict with his theory of God. If God founded the Church in eternity, how can it fail? Does God condemn men for not doing what they cannot do? Barth's criticism of sects and pietists is even more unsparing than that of the Church. Since a Moses may be a Pharaoh, and conversely, it matters little whether one be within or without the Church. But, as a man at the point of death, does not leave a poor hospital, it is better to remain within the Church. On the same principle, conscientious heathen (e. g. Socrates, Buddha) who have not heard of the historical Christ, may be saved. Barth does not make much of foreign missions. His *"Doppelte Prædestination" forbids.*

Unless we have misrepresented Barth in chapter XI above, he has (1) overdrawn the shortcomings of the ministry and the Church; (2) has not sufficiently emphasized the divine side; (3) has made general rather than specific charges against both ministers and the Church; (4) has failed to recognize, much less to counteract, the real enemy of the Church; worldliness, naturalism, infidelity and popular indifference to things spiritual; (5) has failed to emphasize the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost as indicating the abiding presence of God in the Church through all time; and above all (6) has missed the psychological moment in the "crisis" to come forward with a definite platform of principles.

E. THE BARTHIAN THEOLOGICAL UPHEAVAL

1. The Transcendence of God

It is to the credit of the Barthian school that they aim to reinstate God upon his throne and restore to Christianity the supernaturalism and transcendentalism which distinguish it from ethnic religions. Whatever their success, they have compelled the Christian world to face the crisis between God and man, sin and salvation, the here and the hereafter. God is God; man is man. These antitheses are thundered forth as never since the days of the Old Testament prophets. The question is, whether Barthianism does not view God as so far off and transcendent and the chasm between God and man so indescribably broad and deep as to prevent any real revelation, redemption and communion with God. Barth's dictum that finite man has no capacity for God and therefore cannot know him or recognize his presence in the universe, we regard as a grave defect in the dialectic theology. Unless it be remedied, we fear that Barthianism is a poorly disguised agnosticism and unfitted to confront this God-defying age.

So far as it is a system, Barth's theology is theocentric and may be summed up in the Calvinistic principle, *Deo soli gloria.* But all depends upon the manner in which this principle is developed. As seen in chapters VI and X, the Barthian doctrine of God is elaborated along the lines of the Kantian unknowableness of the-thing-in itself and is philosophical rather than Biblical.[22] The dialectic Yes and No involves Barthians in irreconcilable contradictions. They are compelled to hold that every positive implies a negative, and the converse. This we challenge. While it is true that existence implies non-existence, it is not true that sin implies grace, or that divine judgment implies salvation. That would be absolute determinism or indefensible supralapsarianism. Barthian dialectics fails here. "God cannot be known at one and the same time both as absolutely unknown and as the God of grace and truth, and no logical dialectic can make such a contradictory affirmation tolerable to the human mind" (A. C. Knudson.) The transcendence of God is one-sidedly developed to the almost total exclusion of man's true personality.[23]

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[22] "It is clear that Barthians start with an idea of God derived from or suggested by a positivistic and relativistic philosophy. They are Neo-Kantians of the Marburg type. Knowledge for them is restricted to the phenomenal or temporal order. This order points to an eternal being beyond itself, and only **points** toward it or him. The Eternal remains of necessity unknown. He is the Absolute, out of all relations, and beyond the reach of human knowledge...God is and ever remains **Deus abscon-**

2. The New Transcendentalism

That there is a transcendental world is taught by every deep thinker from Dugald Stewart to James Ward. Radically different from ordinary truths are those known as "metphysical and transcendental" (D. Stewart) ; Freedom is "a transcendental idea because reason creates it independent of experience" (Thilly) ; the characteristic feature of Kant's philosophy is "the distinction between the transcendental self and the empirical self" (Mary Calkins). James Ward characterizes W. James' derision

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ditus. Revelation does not rob him of that character. But, if so, what is the value of revelation? A revelation that does not reveal would seem to be a contradiction in itself" (A. C. Knudson, **Methodist Review, July 1928**).

[23] "In modern theology there has been a shift from the transcendence to the immanence of God. Formerly the sovereignty of God was pressed so far as to approach fatalism, which is the tendency of divine transcendence; the tendency of the divine immanence is to pass into pantheism. Either of these views is intolerable to our thought, for each is a lion's den, where all human tracks go in and none come out....The mutual immanence of the divine and the human eludes our powers to trace its boundaries and operations" (J. H. Snowden, **Old Faith and New Knowledge**).

of Kant's transcendental unity as "a blunder" absolutely.

It was shown in chapter XIV that despite protest, science starts with assumptions, such as cause, force, relation and others purely metaphysical and transcendental. No scientist pauses to prove that he exists or that he has mind; he would need mind to prove that he has mind. To define means to limit, to bring under another head. But an ultimate (God, life, personality), as a *summum genus,* cannot be brought under another head. Here science and philosophy are baffled.[24] Though, as seen above the German word, *Irrationalismus,* according to Külpe, was formerly equivalent to the English *super-naturalism,* it has now come to be employed largely in an epistemological sense with a wide latitude of meaning, as non-rational, anti-rational, super-rational, transcendental. It means a world which man accepts, but can neither define nor fathom. The word transcendental being of good repute and employed by Kant and German philosophers generally, as well as by Barthians, appears to us to express fairly well the inner and dominating character of the Barthian school.[25]

The question is, Do Barthians build on a safe epistemology? We fear not. Their low view of man forbids. Barth writes: "*Romans* appeals neither to an authoritative faith nor a power of constructive thinking, nor to a sense for higher worlds, nor to a special capacity for knowledge, nor to a cultured conscience, nor a religious feeling, but to a *sensus communis*." See more fully page 206. If 'common sense' be a rather *uncommon* thing, we have an insecure basis upon which to erect a system of theology. It is "replacing the relativism of historicism with a new absolutism" (Gustav Krüger, Harv. Theolog. Rev.)

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[24] "There are men and women, by no means stupid, by no means superstitious, to whom humanism, with all its wholesome insistence on the immediate, has never been an answer to the riddle of the ultimate" (P. W. Willson, N. Y. **Times Book Review,** May 18, 1930).

[25] "It is the merit of the transcendental movement, in the thinking of this century, that it possesses an insight which leads it to refuse to respect the limits of phenomenalism and to insist not only on the existence of realities beyond the sensible horizon but also on the power of human intelligence to embrace these within the circle of knowledge....The whole spiritual history of nature and humanity finds its rationale in the postulate of a transcendent and self-existent being....The categories [are] the most important single outcome of modern philosophy" (A. T. Ormond, Prof. Phil., Princeton Univ., **Basal Concepts in Philosophy,** pp. 1, 8, 14).

To leave no doubt as to his meaning Barth adds: "I mean a movement from above, a movement from the third dimension, so to speak, which transcends and yet penetrates all these movements of mankind and gives them their inner meaning and motive." Such is the key to the new transcendentalism, a perpendicular line from heaven to earth *(senkrecht von oben)* which brings messages from eternity into time. Such teaching may satisfy Europeans, but it is too vague and visionary to satisfy Americans.

3. *Man and Sin*

Possibly the most radical and revolutionary idea ever advanced reagrding man and sin is the Barthian.

(1). *Man.* Barth's partly true, partly false doctrine of God issues in a partly true, partly false doctrine of man. According to Scripture, man is a rational and accountable agent. According to Barth man is "unfree," that is, not only incapable of saving himself but incapable of free choice. As seen in chapters V, VI, XII, XIII, "man stands related to God as the not-given to the given, as not-being to being." Again, man is a vessel of wrath, "incapable of either thinking of, or of obeying God." The figure of the potter and the clay is pushed to an extreme. "From the potter to the clay there is no bridge." Strictly, man is not, cannot be, a free moral agent according to

Barthianism. This is a fatal error. The Barthian ethics is of a doubtful character.[26]

(2). *Sin.* According to Barth, sin is a cosmic, eternally decreed, necessitated event, not a free act of Adam or of any other man. This is an utterly un-protestant view. "Man's creatureness is his fetter. His sin is his guilt. His death is his fate." Creaturhood, sin and death go together. Creation is a curse. It is hard to conceive that Barthians mean to make God the author of sin, but they nowhere explain how man can be held accountable if he has no power of self-determination. The love of God occupies a subordinate place in Barthianism; the personal relation of will to will, of God to man, is displaced by the dialectical, relation of eternity and time. Human striving is vain; human history is a farce. "The judgment of God is the end of history." All religious activities, even singing and prayer, fall under this condemnation. Worship of God, feeling of God's nearness, speaking and writing on divine things, even books on ROMANS (his own included) rest under Barth's damnatory judgment.[27] Page 74 above.

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[26] Professor Brunner has a fine article on "The Problem of Ethics" (TC, pp. 68–91) but on Barthian premises it is a **non sequitur.** Professor Bultmann alleges that Jesus had no ethics, no universally valid rules on virtues and values. Professor Erich Foerster in a lengthy article questions whether amid the conflicting views of Barth, Brunner and Bultmann a dialectic ethics is possible. With the Barthian obliteration of moral and religious distinctions a system of ethics is an impossibility.

[27] A Swiss minister writes: "I believe that most of the members of our churches who hear and read such statements [as the above] possibly in a wrong connection, would be surprised, indignant or at least confused. They will ask: Is there no God? And religion, the most sacred thing that we experience and may yet experience, our prayers, our inmost sensations, in which we have felt God's power within us and over us and known ourselves spiritually uplifted,—is all this merely human feeling, human illusion? And shall all the inspiring evangelical hymns fall under this condemnation" (condensed from the original of P. Burckhardt, p. 74, above).

4. *Barthianism and the New Humanism*

The Barthian doctrine of the transcendence of God as over against divine immanence in man undermines every form of religion or substitute for religion offered by the rising new humanism. The old humanism was a return to the liberalizing study of the Latin and Greek classics. The new humanism is a return to the "Man is the measure of all things" of Protagoras. By a strange confusion of thought, man, offspring of an amœba, according to science, has now become a demi-god, aspiring to solve the unsolved problems of the ages. The key to the new humanism is a denial of a supernatural God and of a supernatural order in nature and history. This said, all is said. The rest is amplification.

Professor Brunner merits highest praise for exposing in a half dozen books the humanistic view that the only revelation is the inborn revelation in man, even Schleiermacher teaching a type of immanent religion, "a religion within the religions."[28] The old writers held that a God-consciousness in man is a stepping-stone to the acceptance of Christianity. Brunner regards this as a kind of immanence leading logically to an inner revelation, the corner-stone of humanism, the very auto-soterism which the Christian faith rejects. Our conclusion is that Brunner in his over-emphasis of God's transcendence and underestimate of man's endowment is not in a position to counteract the havoc created by humanism.[29]

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[28] Dr. Squires, connected with the educational department of the Presbyterian Church, writes: "The Barthian movement opposes humanistic interpretations of religion. Humanistic tendencies are running strong in the religious educational circles of America. John Dewey is the outstanding humanist of our times. Will Durant says that practically every public school in America has felt the influence of Dewey. That statement is no exaggeration. Moreover, Dewey is rapidly becoming as influential in religious education as he is in secular education. The humanism and positivism of Dr. Dewey are wholly incompatible with the spirit and content of the Barthian movement. Dewey rules God out of consideration; Barthianism centers the destiny of the race in Him. With Dewey, religion cannot be anything more than Comte (Dewey's teacher) made of it a worship of humanity. With the Barthians God is all in all."

5. *Religious Education*

According to Barth and Brunner, most of the schemes of religious education are false in principle because they start with what man rather than God does in religion. Christianity is a life, but it is also a system of beliefs. We cannot "bracket the question of doctrine" and assume that it has been settled, says Barth. The prime trouble with protestantism is that it has no gospel which it MUST preach. "The mischief has been wrought by a disparagement of doctrine" and the substitution of all kinds of man-devised schemes. Such, too, is the burden of Brunner in "*Mysticism and the Word.*" On the title-page is a double motto: on the left a quotation from Göthe's Faust, "Feeling is everything, the name but empty sound and vapor"; on the right is Luther's *Verbum est principium rerum.* Schleiermacher's view of religion is that of Faust, which is also that of modern theology. Brunner develops this contrast with remorseless logic. Here again it is either *reason* or *revelation.* There is no middle ground. Christian education should be not so much a psychology of religion, as indoctrination of youth in the truths of Scripture.

6. *The Barthian Bible*

Barthianism deserves credit for its high regard, outwardly at least, for the Bible. The real or supposed

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[29] Brunner finds so many objections to immanence that one must ask whether under such dialectic manipulation any image of God in man is left. In other connections we cited the Rev. Dr. E. V. Gerhart, a former president of the Lancaster theological seminary, to the effect that "within the compass of the cosmos, man is the **most real revelation of God,**" and that "the constitution of man being fashioned in the image of God, there exists a correlation between God as God and man as man...Between the infinite essence of the Godhead and the finite being of man there is reciprocal fitness." Vid. pp. 93, 216–9, 244 above.

Biblicism has had something to do with the popularity of the movement with a certain class of people who do not look beneath the surface, but are swayed by sentiment or appearances. It was shown in chapters VII and VIII that this reverence for the Bible turns out to be a non-acceptance of Scripture in the true, historic sense and the substitution of a wholly foreign and hitherto unknown theory of a transcendental Bible, found only in the fertile Barthian brain.

With the Barthian Bible, composed largely of inaccuracies, contradictions, myth and legend, it is difficult to see upon what basis there can be proof of a special revelation, and least of all a once-for-all revelation. It follows that Barthians can logically accept the results of the most destructive literary-historical criticism (of the Graf-Wellhausen type) and in fact throw the extant Bible overboard on the ground that revelation cannot be recorded, but must be transcendentally apperceived. Barth, to be sure, makes a vain effort to save something from the wreck by his threefold division into the original revelation *(Urgeschichte),* the current Bible and a hidden, transcendental revelation mediated through faith. This means that one accepts the unwritten Bible through faith and then on the basis of such faith proves that the Bible is the Word of God,—a clear case of reasoning in a circle.[30] See p. 116.

It is only the super-temporal, mystical Bible, that does not and never did exist in concrete form that contains a revelation. Brunner says explicitly: "The word of the prophets is not in itself the Word of God; it is merely a word concerning the Word of God" (TC p. 34). Since the word of the prophets is merely the word of fallible man and since, further, neither Barth nor Brunner, so far as we can discover, anywhere states that Scripture is divinely inspired, it follows that Barthians have no Bible at all, or only an imaginary one.

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[30] "Bei Barth ist das Wort Gottes etwas innerlich Gesprochenes, ein leerer Begriff, der das geschriebene Wort Gottes misst, also der Geist, Geist, der die Bibel beurteilt und ihren Wert feststellt oder auch nicht feststellt, was man ja alles beides bei Barth tun kann" (M. Burgdorf, **Das Wort Gottes bei Barth und Luther**, p. 18).

7. *Jesus Christ*

The absolute dualism between time and eternity is developed one-sidedly in the whole dialectic theology, but most arbitrarily in that most vital of all subjects, the person of Christ. Jesus is in time; Christ is in eternity. Jesus means the fallen world of time, Christ the world of "the original creation." The impossibility of reconciling such heterogeneous elements is pointed out in chapters VIII, IX, XII.[31]

In various German theological circles the opinion is gaining ground that Barth's Christology is even more unsatisfactory than his anthropology. A typical example is the elaborate discussion by Schmidt-Japing, who holds that Barth's low view of the Bible and of history forbids a safe starting-point.[32]

8. *Conclusion.*

Any attempt to compare Karl Barth with theologians of the post-Schleiermacher period, either in Europe or

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[31] Barth's revolutionary view of Christ is seen in the following: "Jesus Christ is **not** the crowning keystone in the arch of **our** thinking. Jesus Christ is **not** a supernatural miracle that we may or may not consider true. Jesus Christ is **not** the goal which we hope to reach after conversion, at the end of the history of our heart and conscience" (WGuT, p. 155, tr. 181).

[32] "Strictly there is no Christology in the dialectic theology, for certainly one may not call it a Christology when Gogarten and Barth at the close of their discussion of the crisis and its inevitableness affirm that the whole matter may be summed up in the formula: **Jesus Christ**...How can we reach Jesus Christ if the Bible be merely a book like any other?" op. cit. p. 91. See page 219.

America, is futile. Broadly speaking, Ritschl, Tröltsch, Herrmann, Harnack, sought to defend the Christian faith with new weapons or the old somewhat sharpened. The same is true of the most eminent American theologians, fundamentalists and modernists alike. Barth is in a class by himself. He is neither a fundamentalist, nor a modernist, and yet he is both. He regards no one doctrine, whether the *sola fide* of Luther, the *soli Deo gloria* of Calvin, or the love or holiness of God as pivotal, but Scripture as the Word of God (which, too, is a doctrine). This sounds well, but in the hands of Barth and his school, it means something entirely different from the generally accepted doctrine of a well-authenticated Bible.

Barth's system, so far as it is a system, must be viewed as a whole. Are the organizing principle and the various parts naturally and logically related? Do they constitute a body of Christian truth defensible at the bar of Scripture (to which Barth appeals) and of contemporaneous thought? Our investigation has shown that Barthianism strictly is not a defence or exposition of protestant doctrine as heretofore understood, but a cosmic philosophy in which the fundamental doctrines of God, man, sin, redemption, the Bible, time and eternity are in a new setting and have a meaning entirely different from the old creeds and confessions. It is a theological upheaval in which scarcely one stone remains in its original place. This would not matter, if the cataclysm revealed the true order, but that is questionable.

The unexpected turns up on every page. The Yes and the No, the possible and the impossible swamp everything. Brunner writes: "The ground of truth, the truth in truths, never becomes known to us and therefore all our knowledge remains foreign to truth, to truth and untruth alike *(und darum bleibt alle unsere Erkenntnis im*

Abstand von der Wahrheit selbst, also zugleich Wahrheit und nicht Wahrheit" (PuO p. 8). So said Hume, the arch sceptic. We can know nothing of the Yonside, of heaven (Barth), even though Scripture relates much. What the Heidelberg Catechism teaches regarding the certainty of salvation ("a church chosen to everlasting life, agreeing in true faith, and that I am and forever shall remain a living member thereof...an heir of eternal life," 54, 59) is no part of Barthianism, for he who hopes for salvation is on the edge of a precipice and may topple over on the wrong side.

Barth's style of putting things never lags; it abounds in "thrills." A critic, reviewing Burgdorf's above-mentioned book, says that "the not wholly new charge that Barth is a *Schwarmgeist* is borne out in the Dogmatics." Barth is at once serious and spectacular, profound and erratic, a Heraclitus and a Luther, a Calvin and a Kant, a Herrmann and Nietzsche, ever armed, cap-a-pie, with a Yes and a No, paradoxes, antitheses and negations. Hence he can view Roman Catholics, Jews, infidels, heathen, Nietzsche and the rest as at least half right, since truth is unattainable, "du Narr," thou fool. A writer in the Anglican Theological Review calls Barthianism a paradoxical theology, "in which a man is condemned and acquitted, rejected and elected, a saint and a sinner at the same time, a condition in which the just and the righteous are strangely near crooks and prostitues" (G. G. Kullmann). Barth's constant refrain, 'you are right with the possibility that you are wrong' is a stupid Either-Or, coming to nothing.

The outstanding merit of Barthianism is the emphasis on God as Creator and the Christian religion as a supernatural, transcendental order through the revelation in Christ Jesus. These and related positions, though well taken, are in our judgment maintained with such questionable unity and consistency and with so many departures from classic Lutheran and Reformed confessions that among European theologians there is almost "ein allgemeines Schütteln des Kopfes."

In the language of Karl Barth himself, though possibly in a different sense, "The so-called Barthian theology will one day go, as it came and justice will be done to it" ("die sogenannte Barth'sche Theologie wird eines Tages gehen, wie sie gekommen ist, und ihr wird ihr Recht geschehen" (Z. d. Z., 1926, p. 36).

9. Opinions of Others

1. *Favorable.* Prof. Aug. Lange, an authority on Zwingli and Calvin, said in 1925 that Karl Barth is the greatest theologian since Schleiermacher. Count Hermann Keyserling regards Barthianism as the final and genuine word for Lutheranism and Barth as the savior of protestantism in Germany. Others, too, hold that the Barthian dogma has not only "re-discovered" protestantism but has actually rescued it from a terrible crisis. The *Congregationalist* says editorially: "The crisis in theology points out at once our need of the best theology and the poverty of that best; it insists that unless God reveals *himself* all our thinking is sounding brass or as a tinkling cymbal." It is reported that students are flocking to Berlin, Marburg, Göttingen, Münster to attend courses in Barthianism. 2. *Unfavorable.* Sharp critiques have come from Harnack, Tröltsch, Julicher, Stephan, etc. It is called "a desperado theology," "Marcionitic sheet-lightening," "a philosophic speculation without Biblical support or sound philosophic reasoning" (a Princeton theological professor), "a species of agnosticism akin to that of Herbert Spencer" (Dr. W. P. Patterson, Edinburgh). Dr. Ad. Keller in his inaugural address as pro-

fessor of theology in Geneva is quoted as saying of Barthianism: "C'est, a-t-il, une théologie du *désespoir,* par conséquent, une théologie qui méconnait trop l'élément optimiste de l'Evangile du Christ" (*La Semaine Religieuse*).

Barthians are not agreed on fundamentals, as seen in Barth's caustic comments on Brunner's MuW and Brunner's equally caustic criticism of Barth's view of the *imago Dei.* See GuM, pp. 56–7. German theologians are now more than ever perplexed over Barthianism. Haitjema: "Barth's Dialectics is not a consistent philosophic principle....In one moment he is '*mit sich selbst uneins,*' in the next a witness of revelation." Grisebach: "a veritable Pandora box." Schmidt-Japing: "Ein auf den Kopf gestellter Hegel." Tillich: "More a rationalistic than a Scriptural discussion of theology." Werner: "Barth's nominalistic conception of God forbids a real ethics." G. Wuensch: "An ethics of anger rather than of love."

W. Koepp, a Greifswald professor,: "The crisis theology stands or falls with the fundamental thesis of the difference between time and eternity....In the *Deus dixit redet Gott schlechterdings in sich selber, an sich selber, sich selber, durch sich selber, für sich selber.*" According to Peterson, there is too much of the "überhaupt," as "die Antwort überhaupt," "der Mensch überhaupt," and even "Gott überhaupt." Althaus: "a theology that feeds on scepticism will die of scepticism."

INDEX OF AUTHORS

PAGE
Althaus, P........242, 251, 273
Anselm 36, 42
Apple, T. G................192
Appel Theo. 192
Aquinas, Thom.............217
Aristotle.....5, 36, 92, 217, 221
Asmassan H................42
Augustine......42, 54, 231, 237

Baillie, J..................235
Barth, Karl.......See *Contents*
Barth, Heinrich..27, 35, 41, 201
Baur, F. C.................192
Bavinck, H.............24, 222
Berkeley, G.............22, 205
Biedermann, A. E..........188
Bixler, J. S...........VII, 236
Blatchford, R..............190
Blumhardt, Chr............109
Boehl, E...................125
Bohlen, E..................VII
Bomberger, J. H. A.........192
Bonaventura 145
Bousset, W............39, 193
Briggs, C. A.................3
Brown, W. A...............216
Brunner, E., 34, 39, 52, 55, 59, 75, 108, 125, 129, 131, 138, 161, 163, 176, 178, 183, 187, 192, 211, 225, 232, 239, 244, 248, 254, 265, 270
Bruno, G....................17
Buckham, J. W..............68
Buechsel, F............239, 241
Bultmann, A., 40, 92, 192, 197, 242, 254, 265

Burckhardt, P., VII, 42, 74, 250, 265
Burgdorf, M...............268

PAGE
Caird, J.....................59
Calkins, Mary......59, 203, 262
Calvin, J., 3, 7, 18, 42, 54, 80, 83, 112, 151, 157, 172, 180, 184, 208, 270
Case, S. J..................190
Cassierer, E. 237
Chrysostom 231
Clark, H...................190
Cohen, H., 40, 43, 234, 237, 251
Comte, Aug............238, 266
Cook, J....................222
Cullmann, O...........110, 113
Cyprian 209

Delitzsch, F...........213, 258
Descartes, R.............17, 78
Dewey, J...........22, 224, 266
Dibelius, M............108, 197
Dieffenbach, A. C..........190
Diem, H..................36, 42
Dillmann, Aug.........103, 313
Dilthy, W...................55
Dorner, J. A................58
Dostojewski, F. 30
Drews, A..................193
Driver, S. R.................67
Duhm, B..........101, 191, 253
Durant, W.................266

Einstein, A.....33, 210, 217, 233
Emerson, R. W............203
Erigena, Sco................87

Fairbairn, A. M............116
Fichte, J. G............18, 164
Foerster, E................265
Frothingham, O. B.........203
Fuller, Margaret...........203
Funk, Alfred..............175

PAGE
Gautama-Buddha 194
Gerhart, E. V., 70, 93, 192, 216–9, 252, 267
Gerson, J. C................87
Goethe, J. W..........224, 267
Gogarten, F..........36, 38, 60
Goguel, M.............108, 110
Good, Jeremiah H..........192
Good, James I.............192
Graf, K. H............100, 268
Grafianism..........97, 99, 100
Green, T. H.............23, 25
Green, W. H...............107
Gressmann, H.........110, 255
Grisebach, E..........246, 273
Greutzmacher, H. R.....24, 195

Haeckel, E..................58
Haitjema, Th. L........39, 273
Hamilton, Sir Wm.......89, 92
Harnack, A., 95, 96, 122, 270, 272
Harper, W. R..............118
Hartenstein, K..............42
Harvey, J. W..............230
Hastings Bible Dictionary..170
Haupt, P..................106
Hegel, G. W. F., 5, 18, 57, 85, 185, 187, 210, 273
Heinzelmann, G.........31, 242
Heraclitus 271
Herrmann, W......42, 235, 270
Hibben, J. G............26, 242
Hirsch, E...................22
Hodge, A. A...............118
Hodge, C..........33, 216, 257
Hodge, C. W...............256
Hoeffding, H..........VII, 250
Holt, E. B..................26
Hommel, F. 107
Howison, G. H..........73, 252
Hume, D...............17, 271

PAGE
Husserl, E.................VII

Ibsen, H............30, 42, 109

James, W., 20, 37, 204, 213, 224, 262
Java Man...................75
Joseph, R. W. B.............24
Juelicher, A...........111, 272

Kant, Im., 6, 15, 17, 82, 88, 144, 164, 201, 204, 225, 252
Keller, Ad................272
Keyserling, H.............272
Kierkegaard, S., 6, 10, 30, 42, 49, 219
Kinkel, J. G..............237
Kittel, R..........103, 105, 106
Klostermann, A............103
Knittermeyer, H.........36, 41
Knudson, A. C.........251, 262
Koehler, A................110
Koehler, R.............IX, 110
Koenig, E. 106
Koepp, W..................273
Kohlbruegge, H. F.......93, 94
Kolfhaus, W............IX, 42
Krauth, C. F..............216
Krueger, Gustav...........264
Kuelpe, O.........201, 222, 263
Kullmann, G. G............271
Kutter, H...............30, 42

Lange, Aug. 272
Lange, F. A...............237
Laotze 194
LaPlace, P.........85, 214, 223
Lauba, W. C.................94
Leibnitz, G. W......16, 92, 217
Leighton, J. A..............58
Lindsay, J................238
Lipsius, R. A...............27
Locke, J...............16, 229
Lodge, Sir Oliver.....75, 85, 87

PAGE
Lombard, P................145
Lotze, H.................18, 88
Ludwig, E.................193
Luettge, W................242
Luther, M., 3, 6, 18, 27, 32, 40, 53, 80, 112, 114, 208, 270

Mackintosh, D. C...........235
Marheineke, Ph.............145
Martineau, J...............218
Marvin, W. T...............26
Matthews, S................216
Matthews, W. R.............58
Max Mueller, J. W.........205
McCabe, Jos................58
McCosh, J.............21, 202
Meier, W. A............94, 192
Melchizedek 105, 107
Merz, G....................42
Meyer, H. A. W.............27
Millikan, R. A............220
Montague, W. R.............26
More, P. E.................10
Moses...........102, 175, 193
Muehlmeier, H.............192
Mueller, K..............IX, 12
Mueller-Freienfels, R...223, 225

Natorp, P., 40, 42, 234, 237, 251
Neander, A................192
Newman, J. H...............65
Newton, Sir I.......85, 214, 217
Nietzsche, F. W.........42, 271
Odenwald, Th..............233
Oetinger, F. C............206
Origen 57
Ormond, A. T...........25, 263
Orr, J......................3
Ostwald, W.................57
Otto, R.....11, 24, 189, 228, 230
Overbeck, F................27

Paganini, N...............211

PAGE
Papini, Giov. 9
Patterson, W. P...........272
Patton, F.................216
Pascal, B..............10, 70
Paul, St., 6, 9, 27, 50, 63, 209, 235
Paulsen, F................237
Pepper, G. D. B...........210
Perry, R. B................26
Peterson, Erich........242, 273
Pharaoh 102, 268
Pitkin, W. B...............26
Plato........5, 36, 40, 124, 210
Powell, E. P..............190
Protagoras 266

Ragaz, L...................42
Reid, T....................21
Reisner, E.................42
Reuterdahl, A..............86
Rickert, H................233
Ritschl, A., 18, 88, 161, 189, 235
Roosevelt, Theo........193, 270
Royce, Jos.............56, 59
Rothe, R...................57
Ruetenik, H. J............192
Rust, H...................192

Sachs, A..................190
Sanday, W..................69
Sayce, A. H...........105, 107
Schaeder, E...............242
Schaff, P.............192, 193
Schelling, F. W., 18, 87, 164, 203, 225
Schenkel, D................68
Schiller, F. C. S.......59, 224
Schlegel, A. W.............11
Schleiermacher, Fr., 18, 52, 55, 59, 65, 76, 85, 123, 157, 189, 211, 247, 267
Schmidt-Japing, J. W., 219, 269, 273

PAGE
Schmidt, H. W., 37, 61, 72, 250
Schoppenhauer, A..........205
Schultz, H..................195
Schuppe, W.................237
Scotus, Duns 217
Sellin, E....................106
Shedd, W. G. T.........82, 150
Sidgwick, A................119
Simmel, G..................231
Shutter, W.................190
Snowden, J. H.............262
Socrates.............5, 65, 260
Spaulding, E. G.............26
Spencer, H.......55, 84, 89, 220
Spengler, O.......VIII, 37, 240
Spinoza, B.......17, 53, 87, 209
Staehelin, L.................88
Stephan, Horst........235, 272
Stewart, Dugald.......202, 262
Stewart, W. K................8
Strauch, Max..VI, 54, 138, 140
Strong, Aug. H............216
Squires, W. A..............266

Taine, H...................194
Tauler, J....................87
Tennyson, A...............159
Tertullian 9
Thayer, J. H........*Lexicon* 51
Thelemann, O...........69, 206
Thilly, F..............202, 262
Tholuck, F. A. G.........27, 81
Thomson, J. A.............220
Tillich, P.........188, 239, 273

PAGE
Thurneysen, E., 27, 36, 56, 97, 99, 102, 110, 191, 210, 253
Tolstoy, L...........30, 42, 109
Troeltsch, E., 37, 189, 234, 270, 272
Unamuno 11

Vaihinger, H...............237
Van Horne, D...............114
Van Oosterzee, J. J., 86, 88, 118
Volkert, J..................237
Von Hartmann, E............57
Ward, James, 58, 203, 262, 271
Warfield, B.B..............164
Weber, O...................105
Wegschneider, J. A. L......196
Wehrung, G...........VII, 236
Weiss, B.....................27
Welker, G. W...............192
Wellhausen, J..........100, 268
Werner, W..................273
Wernle, F..................186
Wiesner, W.................VII
Williard, G. W.............192
Wilson, G. A..........220, 272
Wilson, P. W...............263
Wilson, Woodrow...........193
Winchell, A................220
Wolff, Ch....................17
Wuensch, H.................273
Wundt, W..................237

Zahn, Th.....................27
Zwingli, U.................184

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